

SC029950

Registered provider: Somerset County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides short breaks for children and young people who have physical and learning difficulties, sensory impairments and complex health needs.

The home is owned and managed by a local authority.

The home currently provides short breaks for 12 children. At the time of this inspection, the inspector met five children who were visiting.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since October 2013. The registered manager was on leave during the inspection, she joined final feedback remotely. The deputy manager and responsible individual supported the inspection.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **Good0**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 April 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2021	Full	Good
29/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/05/2019	Full	Good
22/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care when they come to stay at this short-break home. They enjoy a homely environment that is welcoming, inclusive and provides them with space to explore and to enjoy new experiences and opportunities. Staff develop extremely positive relationships with children and place them at the centre of their care.

At the time of the inspection, the inspector observed children arriving at the home. They were happy and excited to come and stay. Lots of smiles and laughter and children waving their parents off demonstrate that children feel safe and look forward to their stay. Staff greet children with genuine warmth and delight to see them. Children told the inspector that they like to come and stay and are happy here.

As a result of their short-stay visits, children learn new skills, become more independent and maintain and develop friendships. The feedback from parents and social workers about this short-break service is tremendously positive. They speak of the children making great progress with their communication skills, confidence and independence.

Children benefit from an environment that meets their individual needs and interests. This includes a sensory room, an arts and crafts room, 'chill out' spaces, a games room and an extensive garden area. Children have access to a wide range of toys, play equipment and learning aids. In addition, the home is adapted to meet the physical needs of children. This includes overhead hoists, sinks that raise and lower and specialist bathing facilities.

Staff capture and celebrate children's achievements by taking lots of photos of them taking part in a wide range of activities. This includes activities in the wider community and in the home. Photos show children thoroughly enjoying the activities. In addition, staff award children with 'magic moments' certificates. This promotes children's confidence and self-esteem.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children are safe when staying at this home. This is echoed by parents and social workers who say that they do not have any concerns about the safety and well-being of the children. Since the last inspection in April 2021, no referrals have needed to be made to the designated officer or children's services.

Staff know the children well and they have a thorough understanding of the children's needs. Because of this, staff respond effectively if children are feeling unhappy or worried. As a result of this, children feel safe and secure.

Staff complete detailed records in relation to incidents. Most incidents are low level. Leaders and managers scrutinise these records effectively to look for trends and triggers. In addition, they ensure that staff reflect on their practice to ascertain whether the incident could have been managed differently.

Restraint is rarely used. If used, this is as a last resort to keep children and others safe. However, following the use of a restraint, leaders and managers failed to ensure that the child's risk assessment and their behaviour support plan were updated.

Some children need extra support overnight to ensure that their health, safety and personal care needs are met. For some children, this includes the use of visual and audio devices. Leaders and managers have developed a policy for the use of these devices to ensure their appropriateness. However, a review of the reasons and consents for the continued use of these devices for two children has not taken place recently.

Leaders and managers ensure that medicines are kept safely and administered effectively in accordance with children's healthcare plans. Leaders and managers have developed good systems to regularly audit and monitor the administration and safe keeping of medicines.

The home's location risk assessment and environmental risk assessment are regularly reviewed and updated. Leaders and managers ensure that staff recruitment is effective and safe, to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A highly competent and well-qualified registered manager effectively manages this home. She is supported by an enthusiastic, motivated and dedicated staff team and has a clear vision for the service.

Staff speak highly of the support and guidance that they receive. The registered manager ensures that staff receive regular and effective supervision. Staff skills, enthusiasm and motivation are recognised and encouraged. For example, a member of staff has recently undertaken research in the importance of sleep for children. These findings have been shared with the staff team and with the children's parents. Recommendations from the research are in the preliminary stages of being implemented. Another member of staff has developed a staff training programme in relation to sensory processing. However, the implementation of this training has not

been evaluated yet to ascertain its impact on staff learning and the care that they deliver.

The registered manager has a thorough understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and responds effectively to recommendations made by the independent person. In addition, she has completed a detailed review of the quality of care. However, the most recent review does not contain clear statements about what has improved following consultation with children.

The registered manager regularly scrutinises and evaluates a wide range of records. However, the home's environmental risk assessment does not include that the garage is not in use and that it should not be accessed.

Feedback from parents, social workers and other professionals is extremely positive. All are unanimous in highlighting the high-quality and personalised care that children receive. In addition, they speak of the excellent communication with leaders, managers and staff. Parents speak well of the 'end of stay reports' that they are sent. They say that the reports inform them of how their child has spent their time at the home. This demonstrates the importance that the home places on working together to improve the lives of children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(h)) In particular, ensure that following the use of restraint, children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans are updated. In addition, that the home's environmental risk assessment includes that the garage is condemned and not accessible.	03 October 2022
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(d)) In particular, ensure consultation continues with parents and social workers so that the use of a monitoring devices is based on the child's assessed need, is risk assessed and that the practice is agreed and regularly reviewed.	03 October 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review contains the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that, following the recent staff training in sensory processing, this training is evaluated to ascertain the impact that the training has had on the delivery of care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC029950

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4DY

Responsible individual: Serena Pike

Registered manager: Tammie Rose

Inspector

David Kidner, Social Care Ofsted Inspector

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