

SC031410

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by the local authority. The service is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The registered manager is suitably qualified and registered with Ofsted in April 2018.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 January 2020

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

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: 18 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
22/10/2018	Full	Good
13/12/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d))	28/02/2020
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d)) Specifically, ensure that visitors are made aware of the emergency procedures upon arrival.	28/02/2020

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress. Some have gained greater levels of independence, others are improving their communication. Achievements are celebrated, and the children are proud of the progress that they make. Relationships between the staff and the children are warm and nurturing. Staff know the children well: they support them to learn new skills and to stretch themselves in order to gain greater levels of independence.

The children have the opportunity to participate in the development of the home. Their wishes and views are valued and used to make improvements. The children's voice has been effective in the development of a music cupboard, where they can easily select the instrument that they want to play. A new trampoline is on its way and a quiet space has been developed with soft lighting, which is popular with all the children.

The children enjoy a good balance of activities and time to relax. The children enjoy seasonal trips out and are enabled to access a wide range of fulfilling and stimulating community-based activities. The staff have improved the memory books that give the children a lasting record of their time at the home, which include photos and mementoes of trips and activities.

Education is valued. The staff supported several of the children to make the transition to college. Careful planning and practical preparation during the summer holidays resulted in the children feeling ready for this next step. Consequently, they are all making progress and enjoying college life.

Careful planning ensures that departures from the home go well. One child's departure was changed to facilitate his individual needs. As a result, he was able to move to his new home feeling well prepared. Another is planning to move soon. She said, 'My key worker is helping me plan my move; she will make sure I have everything that I need for my new place.'

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

The children describe feeling safe and they are relaxed at the home. The staff demonstrate that they know what to report, to whom and when. Records have improved, providing a clear account of any concerns or incidents. Transparent information-sharing with key stakeholders further supports the safeguarding culture.

Risks are known and well understood. The staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the complex needs of the children and of the strategies that reduce risk. Practical measures include the use of protective clothing and specialist equipment. Consequently, the staff deliver care that reduces risk.

Specialist support is actively sought. Excellent collaborative working with the positive behaviour support team ensures that measures of control and restraint are frequently

reviewed. The expert advice and guidance inform plans that adapt as the children's needs change. Regular reviews of restrictive measures further ensure that the safeguards in place promote the children's needs without being onerous.

Individuality is celebrated at this home. The children are encouraged to develop their individual personalities and preferences. They enjoy expressing themselves through their appearance and interests. Staff manage the children's needs sensitively and respectfully.

The environment is generally well kept. The children's rooms are personalised, and there are different spaces for them to relax. However, not all maintenance requests that the manager reports are actioned. The light in a child's bathroom has been disconnected for 10 months due to a leak in the roof. Furthermore, black mould has begun to grow around the ceiling. This has the potential to impact on the children's health, which in some cases is already compromised due to ongoing, severe health conditions.

The routine servicing and maintenance of equipment further ensure safety at the home. Regular emergency tests and drills ensure that the staff and children know what to do should an emergency occur. However, visitors to the home are not consistently advised of the emergency procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager leads her team with clear direction. She has developed a learning culture where the staff are actively engaged in reflection that informs changes to practice. The staff feel well supported and encouraged by the learning culture to develop good practice.

Regular supervision and annual appraisal provide the staff with further opportunities to develop their practice. Staff working towards their level 3 qualification are given individualised support, which they find effective to keep them on track. Training and development opportunities are welcomed by a staff team whose members are keen to learn.

Managerial oversight is effective. When errors have occurred, investigations take place in order to pinpoint the shortfalls. Performance management and development plans are used to improve practice and monitor staff practice.

The roles and responsibilities of the staff have been reviewed. Job descriptions have been updated and the staff describe being much clearer about their roles and responsibilities now. Development plans include staff and the children participating in the review of the home's statement of purpose and the continuing development of the home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC031410

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: 175b Priory Road, Hastings, Sussex TN34 3JD

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Rugg

Registered manager: Charlotte De Retuerto

Inspector

Sarah Olliver, social care inspector

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