

SC031410

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority. It provides care for up to seven children with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. There were seven children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager is not yet registered with Ofsted. They have applied to register.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/12/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/03/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive care from a staff team that knows them well. Staff are passionate about the children. They provide a warm and welcoming environment where children can relax and feel at home. The environment has improved since the last inspection. Children worked with a local artist to produce bespoke murals, which reflect their tastes and personalities. The children's personalised rooms reflect their character.

Children make good progress. This is because of the positive relationships between staff and professionals. They work together to meet the children's needs. Staff monitor the children's health needs well. They are responsive to these needs. For example, they have put a programme in place with a local dentist to help to desensitise a child. With a slow process of introduction to the dental environment, the child has begun to trust the staff and the dentist.

Staff understand the importance of education. They go to great lengths to ensure that the children have a positive learning experience. The staff maintain effective regular communication and partnership with the children's schools. This ensures that staff know the experiences of the children at school, and helps them gauge whether children's school experiences affect how they are at home. An intervention by staff helped to improve a child's lived experience of school. They worked with the school to gradually remove the child's electronic device. This enabled improved interactions and involvement in learning and activities.

Staff give children choices and respond to their wishes and feelings. They use communication aids with the children according to their needs. They present them with choices based on the child's understanding. One uses eye-pointing to make choices, such as their hairstyle for the day, while other children use signing and speech to communicate their choices.

Staff treat each child as an individual. Because of this, the children have positive daily experiences. Their choice of activities gives them a degree of autonomy. The children can have their meals according to their individual need. For example, one child grazes while another child has enteral feeding. Staff meet these individual needs well. Staff work to ensure that children have life experiences like their peers. For example, they have experimented with introducing bowling with one child. Walks along the seafront are popular with this child, who prefers calmer, quieter activities.

There is good preparation for children moving into and on from the home. Children can choose the decoration of their rooms as well as fixtures and fittings. One child has a bespoke living environment that they were well prepared for. Staff used social stories to explain to the other children what was happening. For example, the noise caused by the building work related to this new living environment. The staff managed the process carefully and sensitively.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff carefully assess risks for the children. They work with a team of external professionals to ensure processes are in place to manage risk. However, staff are not consistent in risk management. In a near-miss incident, staff did not show an understanding of their role. They did not intervene when a child was in a dangerous and risky situation. Additionally, staff propped open doors that are in place to provide safety and security for the children. As a result, a child was able to access a restricted part of the building and cause damage to property and hurt/injure themselves.

Children do not go missing from this home. Procedures are in place to ensure that they do not leave the building without staff. However, during the one near-miss incident, the child could have left the building and been at high risk of harm.

Staff receive training around the understanding and management of behaviours. Clear behaviour management plans are in place for each child. Staff understand children's behaviours and their functions. They are child centred in their response, ensuring that it is beneficial to children. They involve a range of professionals, for example around the communication needs of children and the meaning of some of their behaviours. Because of this, children receive support from committed staff who understand them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have high expectations of what children can achieve. They work to ensure this. They are passionate about the care of the children and are committed to improving standards.

The manager has a clear understanding of the progress that children make. However, the quality of the recording of incidents by staff does not meet a good standard. While the manager is aware of this, there continues to be a low standard of recording. Recording lacks adequate oversight by the management team.

Leaders and managers provide an environment that encourages staff to grow and develop. Staff feel well supported by leaders and managers. Staff receive regular reflective supervision. This supervision provides opportunities to reflect on incidents and practice. The staff speak positively about their appraisals.

Leaders and managers have working relationships with a range of professionals. They work together to ensure the best possible care. They are part of a wider network that provides focused care for the children. The manager advocates for the children. She works to involve them in decisions about them where this is possible.

Leaders and managers promote diversity and inclusion. They recognise the children as individuals and work with families to ensure that they meet the children's religious, cultural and personal identity needs.

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, The 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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; 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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(d)) Aspects of this requirement were raised at the last inspection and are restated. New aspects are added.	30 June 2025

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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, ensure the quality of recording incidents and ensure that staff have the skills in writing clear, concise records. Additionally, ensure that the manager has oversight of the recordings.	30 June 2025
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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: SC031410

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1UE

Responsible individual: Fiona Lewis

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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M1 2WD

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