

SC031479

Registered provider: London Borough of Southwark

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides planned short breaks for up to five children who have complex learning and/or physical disabilities and/or challenging behaviours.

The home has not had a registered manager since June 2018.

This home shares the premises with a similar service for adults. The registered manager and staff work across both provisions. The Care Quality Commission regulates and inspects the adult service.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 28 October 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 July 2021

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: 9 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
10/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/10/2018	Full	Good
19/02/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the home has been running a limited and different service. It has been providing short breaks and longer care for up to two disabled children at any one time in an emergency. At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. As a result, due to the high level of support and supervision needs of these children, other children's access to the short breaks service has been limited.

Staff successfully deliver individualised care in a nurturing environment. They have a very clear understanding of each child's support needs. Staff use patience and perseverance to understand complex behaviours. For example, when a child displayed challenging behaviour, the staff understood that he had been interrupted in following through with his ritualistic actions.

Children's care plans are individualised and detailed. Children's health, communication and emotional needs are identified, along with their cultural and dietary needs. This enables the staff team to be confident in its understanding of each child's support needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the running of the home. Changes have been made to the admission criteria to give priority to key workers and those families most in need of the service. Specific pre-admission screening and risk assessments are in place.

Staff liaise with schools to provide consistent support to help children to learn and develop. Examples include the use of Makaton, word puzzles and numerical tasks as well as more-creative activities. For one child, his creative playing of the piano is a joy to behold. One child says that he never gets bored.

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

Behaviour support plans and risk assessments are effective. Plans provide clear and sensible strategies to lessen known or new presenting behaviours. In general, many children understand boundaries and respond positively. Using distraction techniques as opposed to restraint is a strength of the home.

Staff follow a clear reporting procedure if a child runs away from the home. However, there have been two incidents when a child was able to leave the home unnoticed. This was despite the high staffing ratios and alarmed doors. Following these incidents, staff have put extra control measures in place to ensure that this does not happen again. Investigations are in progress to provide a more detailed analysis and identify any further learning.

The responsible individual has a good oversight of safeguarding concerns. Discussions with the designated officer for safeguarding take place when there are potential issues about staff conduct and practices. Staff understand that transparency and honest sharing of information in their role contribute towards safeguarding children.

The home is warm and visually welcoming. It is well equipped to meet the needs of disabled children. Specialist equipment is maintained safely, and all of the children have personal emergency evacuation plans.

Recruitment practices follow corporate protocols. This ensures that only suitable people work with children. Certificates confirm the safety of the premises, and staff undertake regular health and safety checks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has not had a registered manager for over two years. A new manager has been appointed and he has begun to make positive changes within the service. The positive impact of this is most noticeable in the quality of the home's records. The home's paperwork now shows evidence of the good work of staff.

Staff morale has greatly improved. Staff say that they have confidence in the effectiveness of the current management arrangements. The staff say that they now feel listened to and are consulted in relation to any changes to the service and in the care of the children.

Staff are committed to the children in their care and promote positive outcomes for them. One parent said, 'Staff are fantastic, the changes in the management have enhanced the positive feeling of the home.'

Case files show strong evidence of management oversight and auditing. The manager oversees the regular update of risk assessments and care plans. He uses this information and his understanding of the children to inform child-centred decision-making.

There is regular monitoring of the home's quality of care, which includes identifying and reflecting on trends and patterns. Leaders and managers regularly gather the views of professionals. However, the views of parents, children and staff are not included in the review of the quality of care report. Furthermore, there is no workforce plan in place for the home.

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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, the review of the quality care report should include feedback from parents, children and staff. Furthermore, the report should clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses in the home.	1 November 2021
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— 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;	1 November 2021

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.
(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))

In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that safeguards are in place to ensure that no children are able to leave the home without the knowledge of staff.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that there is a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirement of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.8)

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: SC031479

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Southwark Council, 2nd Floor, 160 Tooley Street,
London SE1 2QH

Responsible individual: Kerry Rabey

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Juanita Mayers, Social Care Inspector

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