

SC031504

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It is registered to provide a short-breaks service and longer-term care for up to six children who may have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 31 March 2007.

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

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 May 2021

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	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: 12 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/11/2019	Full	Good
04/12/2018	Full	Good
21/11/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children love living at this home and visiting for short breaks. The relaxed, fun atmosphere staff inspire is matched by the children's ever-present laughter. Staff support children to take part in a range of enjoyable and purposeful activities. During this inspection, children went trampolining and when they returned, they were very happy and excited about what they had been doing. Staff who did not go with them were keen to hear from the children about their experiences.

Very positive relationships exist between the staff, the children and their families. Staff interactions with children are caring and nurturing. They give the children time and space to develop and to increase their abilities to do things for themselves, while providing encouragement, support and praise.

Children are making good progress, especially with developing their communication skills. Consequently, children can make choices and express their feelings and views. Key workers review children's progress every month. Information from these reviews is used to develop children's plans and to set new goals. Staff celebrate children's achievements and ensure that these are shared with parents. Parents and social workers commented positively on the progress children are making.

When a child leaves the home, they are given meaningful keepsakes which detail their time at the home. These used to be photo books, but staff made improvements so that each child now receives a video diary. These diaries are animated and set to music. Children really benefit from this creative approach at capturing and documenting their memories.

Overall, good improvements have been made to the environment. The home is well decorated, comfortably furnished and has lots of photos of children doing activities displayed on the walls. However, more work is needed to reduce the remaining environmental restrictions and health and safety signs that detract from the otherwise homely space that staff are striving to create. For example, two out of five televisions are stored in locked cabinets, one wardrobe is locked, and children are unable to enter one kitchen without staff due to the use of a stable-type door.

Children's health needs are well managed. Clear plans are in place for children who have specific health conditions. These plans are current and provide detailed guidance for staff. The management of medication is good. The manager has devised a good-quality medication policy to support staff and has requested that the generic policy produced by the local authority is updated to reflect the work in the home.

Staff support children in their education. There is evidence of good co-working with education providers to ensure a cohesive approach to children. This is proving to be effective as it promotes consistency of care.

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

Risk is appropriately managed. Staff have a good understanding of the risks and additional vulnerabilities of each child in their care and take effective action to safeguard them. For example, staff carefully consider the mix of children who visit each evening for short breaks. However, the process to assess the potential risks the existing group of children may present to a new child needs improvement. Currently, the assessment lacks clarity and written guidance about the actions staff would take to mitigate the risks.

Behaviour is well managed. Each child has a clear plan which provides staff with good guidance. The number of incidents at the home is low. Records of incidents used to be in hard copy. Recently, this has moved to an electronic system. This new system does not allow the manager to access these reports for monitoring purposes once they have been submitted. The manager has raised this as a concern to senior managers and is currently ensuring that a hard copy is also maintained, to aid her review and development of the home.

Some of the children receive personal care. This is done respectfully, ensuring that children's dignity and privacy are promoted. Staff diligently record any unknown marks seen on children and appropriately share this information with social workers. However, staff do not consistently record their follow-up actions and outcomes.

Since September 2020, no safeguarding events have been reported. Through discussion, staff were clearly able to demonstrate their knowledge of safeguarding processes and their duty of care to protect children.

Each child has a current personal evacuation plan, which is kept under review. Staff carry out regular fire drills and fire safety checks to ensure that children are aware of what to do in the event of a fire.

Staff recruitment processes are generally appropriate and most files contain all the required information. However, one file lacked evidence of the reason being explored for why a candidate had not put down one of their two most recent employers as a reference. This was addressed during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced, knowledgeable and appropriately qualified for the role. Practically, she monitors the quality of care well and consequently has a good understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement within the home. The manager has high expectations of herself and the staff team. Together, they take effective action to make improvements in the provision. However, the written quality of care report lacks consistent evaluation and analysis of the documented information.

The staff team is very positive about the manager's leadership and the support she gives. They feel listened to and respected by the manager. They feel that she is part of the team and say that she is a 'true hands-on manager'.

Children receive individualised care from well-trained staff who also receive good-quality support. Records of formal staff supervision are appropriate but do not consistently reflect the discussions held and the support given as described by the staff team.

Feedback received from other professionals and parents is overwhelmingly positive. They praise the staff for how they have supported the children to make good progress and for the support they have given to families.

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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d)) In particular, ensure that leaders and managers explore reasons why candidates may not put recent employers as referees.	31 July 2021
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. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). (Regulation 45 (1) (3)) In particular, the written report must consistently demonstrate an analysis and evaluation of the work undertaken at the home.	31 July 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression in the home. For example, they should review the necessity of locked television cabinets, the locking of a wardrobe door, use of the 'stable-type door' into one of the kitchens and the requirement for health and safety signage. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should carry out a risk assessment on all new children prior to them coming to the home. This needs to include the risks a new child potentially presents to children already living at the home and the risk children

already living at the home potentially present to the new child. This risk assessment should include how the identified risks will be mitigated by staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

- The registered person should ensure that records of staff supervision are of good quality and reflect the discussions held. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should ensure that information in electronic records can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. This is vital in supporting the manager's monitoring of work undertaken at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)
- The registered person should ensure that case records are kept up to date. In particular, they should ensure that body chart records consistently record actions taken and the outcome of these actions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: SC031504

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services, City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR

Responsible individual: Kate Markley

Registered manager: Valerie Mower

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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