

SC031698

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority-owned and run children's home. The home can provide care for up to eight children with learning and physical disabilities.

There has been no registered manager since October 2024.

There was one child living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 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	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: 15 January 2025

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
15/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/10/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff have been effective in helping the child to make progress in many areas of their life. Care is specific to them and staff understand their needs. The child has complex needs that require a significant team comprising permanent and agency staff to provide care and support. This is managed well to ensure that the child receives a consistent experience of care. The child has built trusting relationships, which provides them with a secure base from which to make progress.

The staff provide the child with a range of opportunities to access the community and to feel part of it. This includes trips to the cinema, to the park, and more recently to restaurants and cafés.

The child lives in an environment that gives them a sense of belonging. Staff have ensured that the living environment meets with the child's preferences. They recognise that this is where the child lives and that they should make it as comfortable as possible.

Staff are in tune with the child's experiences and potential sources of anxiety. They make good use of social stories as a way of helping the child to cope and understand their current situation and future plans.

The staff have good relationships with the professional network supporting the child. Professionals compliment the staff and express confidence in the care that they provide.

The staff recognise the importance of hearing the child's voice. They provide opportunities for the child's involvement in decisions about them. Additionally, the staff provide the child with choices in their daily life, such activities and meals. Consequently, the child is confident in expressing their views.

Staff support the child to learn independence skills. For example, the child has completed accredited courses that enhance their life skills. The staff work to promote this and celebrate the child's achievements in this area. A strong and effective plan was put in place for a child who moved on from the home earlier this year. This move was successful and involved a large professional team to make it work.

The child receives good support in all areas of need. This includes their health, educational, social and emotional needs. Staff identify children's health needs and respond effectively. They show a strong commitment to ensuring that they meet these needs. The child has lived here for some time and is registered with relevant community health professionals. Staff support the child to access therapeutic services to support their progress.

This child's range of needs means that they need specialist services to ensure their continued development. Staff work effectively with the multi-agency team around the

child to ensure that the child's care plan is regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure that they receive the support they need.

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

The staff understand the vulnerabilities of the child. Risk assessments are under constant review and staff follow clear safety plans to promote the child's safety and well-being, both within the home and out in the community.

Detailed behaviour management plans are in place. Positive behaviour support specialists create the behaviour support plans and provide support and advice to the staff. Because of this, staff know how to respond to the child and support them when they are upset and struggling to manage their emotions. Staff provide the child with opportunities to reflect on any behavioural incidents. Clear, consistent boundaries are in place and staff receive specialist training around behaviour management which is refreshed each year.

Children do not usually go missing from this home. There are strict restrictions of movement based on the legal status of the child living here. However, plans are in place to safeguard the child in the event that they do go missing and a risk assessment reflects this.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made in respect of improving practice in the event of allegations against staff. The provider has taken some steps to address this by updating its policy and working with staff to increase staff awareness in relation to understanding how to respond to allegations. However, when asked, one member of staff was still unclear about the home's revised policy. There have been no allegations since the last inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has been in post since September 2024 but is not yet registered with Ofsted. An application for registration has been received.

The manager shows a good understanding of the child's needs. She has ensured that processes are in place to check the progress of the child. She conducts regular reviews to ensure that interventions to promote the child's education and emotional well-being are supporting the child to make progress. As a result, the manager knows the progress that the child makes and takes effective action to ensure that the child receives the support and care that they need. The manager advocates strongly for the child within the professional network to ensure that care planning decisions are underpinned by a clear, well-informed assessment of the child's needs.

The manager creates a culture of high expectations for the child within the staff team. As a result, the staff show a strong commitment to supporting the child to make progress.

The manager provides a supportive environment for her staff. Good-quality training is in place that enables staff to ensure that they are equipped to meet the child's needs.

Regular, structured supervision and appraisals support staff to continually develop their practice. There is a strong focus on the needs of the child in supervision sessions. This helps ensure that staff have a safe space to reflect on the impact of their practice on the progress and experience of the child.

Regular team meetings provide opportunities for staff to share their views and get support from each other. This includes support from the positive behaviour support team.

Leaders and managers understand the home's areas of strength and areas for development. A comprehensive development plan is in place to further enhance the service and ensure that they achieve their current aims and objectives. They provide appropriate care and support to a child with very complex needs.

The manager understands the need to complete reviews of the quality of care. However, she does not always ensure that she considers feedback from others, such as parents, staff and external professionals. This includes children, their parents, external professionals and staff. This is a missed opportunity to create a holistic review of the home to inform service development. Additionally, she has not ensured a system that provides ease of access to information.

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— 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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, managers must ensure that staff know when and how to raise concerns if children make allegations.	15 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in regulation 45 at least once every six months. The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Reviews should be underpinned by the quality standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. The system must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

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: SC031698

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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