

SC032439

Registered provider: Wiltshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide a short-break service for up to seven children. Some children may have physical disabilities, learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment. The local authority operates the home. The registered manager has been in post since August 2020 and registered with Ofsted in December 2020.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Full	Inadequate
28/10/2019	Full	Good
02/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The experiences of children in this home are not yet consistent. Managers are working towards developing their approach to facilitate and promote friendships between the children. The inspector found this to be in place for some children but not yet all. This has led to more forward planning of activities for some children during their stay.

Children's meetings are held regularly with children during their visit. However, the information captured and how this is then used to improve children's experiences is not yet effective. The inspector found evidence of greater efforts being made by staff to capture children's wishes and feelings.

Parents report that communication with the home has improved. There is a small number of families trialling a new communication system, which captures the children's experiences in a child-friendly format. There are plans to roll this out on a wider basis if the initial pilot is successful.

Parents told the inspector that their children enjoy their time at the home, with one parent describing it as a 'sleepover' for their child. Other parents commented on the 'fondness' with which staff talk about their child and how this helps put them at ease.

Staff continue to enjoy working with the children and describe a positive home environment. Staff told the inspector that the improvements that have been made have impacted positively on the team and the atmosphere, which has benefited the children.

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

There has been a targeted effort to improve safeguarding knowledge and practice in the home to promote children's safety.

Leaders and managers have updated procedures and created mechanisms for the regular reviewing of records. This includes reflecting on practice and how records can be further improved for accuracy and detail. Staff report feeling more confident and knowledgeable about reporting practices.

Wider professionals report an increased dialogue with the manager and staff in the home to share information and concerns. Managers routinely follow up any safeguarding referrals to make sure they have the details of decisions and outcomes and can update the children's records accordingly.

Parents report feeling confident that their children are safe and are assured that, if there are any concerns, they will be contacted promptly.

When incidents have occurred, these have been reviewed by the manager and senior leaders promptly. Changes to practice have been implemented swiftly and communicated with the wider staff team.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The leadership of this home is being developed and strengthened. Leaders and managers are aware of the weaknesses and have plans to address these. The inspector found that some steps have already been taken, but these are in their infancy and not yet fully embedded.

Staff supervision is now prioritised and happening regularly. However, the recording of supervision is weak and does not clearly capture the agreed actions or any directions of the manager to the supervisee. Leaders and managers are aware of this and have already engaged with the council's principal social worker to improve staff supervision.

Leaders and managers have identified specific training to develop staff knowledge in their field of expertise. These are set for future dates. Managers are developing a system to capture staff training to increase management oversight.

Records kept in the home remain weak. The inspector found that work has begun to address the shortfalls in the records, but they are not yet of a consistent quality.

Leaders and managers demonstrate ambition for the home and are committed to developing the service for children.

Staff describe the leaders and managers as supportive of them. Parents further commented on the manager 'going above and beyond' to support them where he could.

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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, ensure children are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the home, that their wishes and feelings are captured and that these inform the delivery of their care.	2 September 2022
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—	30 November 2022

mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)) In particular, that planning for children’s stays takes into consideration their friendships and provides opportunity for friendships to be developed and sustained.	
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— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) In particular, that leaders and managers should ensure oversight of the home and that findings are used to improve practice and record keeping.	2 September 2022
The care planning standard is that children—	30 November 2022

receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and

have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that each child's relevant plans are followed.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))

In particular, ensure that children's records contain information that is relevant and pertinent to the individual child and their care, for example children's risk assessments and care plans.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are recorded to include any agreed actions for reference. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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: SC032439

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wiltshire Council

Registered provider address: Director of Social Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LE

Responsible individual: Lucy Townsend

Registered manager: Kevin Derby

Inspector

Katie Ratcliffe, Social Care Inspector

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