

SC033120

Registered provider: Luton Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority and provides short breaks and respite for children who have additional needs, complex health needs and/or challenging behaviour.

The manager has been registered since July 2011.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 6 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2019	Full	Good
12/12/2017	Full	Good
10/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/07/2016	Full	Good

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 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 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)(b)) In particular, ensure that the staff are all trained in the safe use of physical restraint.	05/12/2019
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 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)(b)) In particular, record any outcomes following safeguarding concerns.	05/12/2019
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv))	05/12/2019

Recommendations

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise, have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings to be heard and respected in the same way as other children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)

- As set out in Regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

In particular, undertake overseas recruitment checks when required.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children build trusting relationships with the staff during their short breaks. They spend time with their friends and enjoy stimulating activities in a safe environment. One parent said, '[Name of child] loves going to the [service]. Once his bag is packed he gets really excited. It's a great opportunity for him to be with his friends.'

The staff compile clear, informative and individualised child-centred plans. These are regularly reviewed and updated, and they support the staff to work effectively with the children.

The staff celebrate the children's efforts. They record these in children's individual log books and display their achievement certificates. This builds the children's self-confidence.

The staff have a good understanding of the children's complex needs. They have relevant training that fully supports the children's healthcare. The staff implement healthcare plans under the guidance of a nurse for disabled children. This provides professional oversight.

Staff understand that transitions for the children and their families can be difficult. They work effectively with the children's parents to support smooth transitions. One parent said, '[Name of child] had never been away from me before. I was apprehensive, but we were fully involved in the transition which was brilliant. It was the best thing for him, he loves spending time there.'

The staff show skill in understanding the children's communication needs. They recognise subtle cues from non-verbal children. However, they do not use these skills to obtain children's wishes and feelings and show the children that they have acted on these.

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

Staff provide clear routines and structures that help the children to feel safe and secure. They use social stories to help reduce children's anxiety and understand what will happen next.

Children have comprehensive individual risk assessments which are reviewed and updated regularly. These support the staff to work consistently to keep the children safe.

Staff are trained in safeguarding children. This training is revisited in staff meetings. This confirms that the staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and who to report concerns to. Each child has an individual safeguarding file for the purpose of recording concerns, notifications, actions and outcomes. However, these files do not all contain the actions taken. This means that the staff may not have a clear understanding of ongoing concerns or outcomes.

The staff rarely use physical interventions. When interventions are necessary, the staff provide children with a good debrief. However, some staff use different intervention methods and some of their records are incomplete. This makes it difficult to monitor the effectiveness of the intervention.

Newly appointed staff have recruitment checks. Their employment references are verified prior to starting work. However, in one instance the checks did not include an overseas check. Therefore, the staff's suitability is not fully explored.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is established and experienced and has the relevant qualifications to manage the home. The manager and the deputy work well together and share the same vision to drive the home forward.

The manager has developed a positive ethos and culture that is child focused. Children are firmly at the centre of their practice. One parent said, 'He [the child] loves staying at the home and really benefits from having the time to meet his friends and participate in activities, these build his independence.'

Partnership working between the manager, the parents and the children's professionals is effective. Detailed information is shared with those involved in the care of the child. This enables a collaborative approach in the child's best interests.

Staff have undertaken the organisation's mandatory training and additional training to support the children's specific needs. The staff hold, or are in the process of achieving, a relevant level 3 diploma.

New staff benefit from an induction that helps them to understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff said that they found the managerial supervision supportive. Regular staff meetings support the staff in their work with the children.

There are clear monitoring systems in place. These systems support the manager to review the trends and the patterns of children's behaviour. The manager uses the recommendations from the independent person's report to develop practice and improve the quality of care. The requirements from the last inspection have been met.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives

of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC033120

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Luton Borough Council, Town Hall, George Street,
Luton LU1 2BQ

Responsible individual: Joanne Fisher

Registered manager: Christine Ali

Inspector

Trish Palmer, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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