

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. It provides short breaks and respite care for children with additional needs, complex health needs and/ social and emotional needs. At the time of this inspection, three children were staying at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2012.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 September 2024

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: 11 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2023	Full	Good
06/04/2022	Full	Good
13/04/2021	Full	Good
02/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, 24 children, on a rotational basis, were accessing this short-breaks service. Since the last inspection, three children have started using the service and one child has moved on from the service due to becoming an adult.

During this inspection, all three children communicated and spent time with the inspector.

Staff are nurturing and have positive relationships with children. They know the children well and understand and meet their individual needs. Staff understand how to communicate with children with complex needs and, whenever possible, give children choices. Children were observed to be happy relaxed and at ease with each other and staff. Children feel well cared for and valued.

Four parents spoke highly of the manager and staff and the care that is provided to their children. Parents said that their children are happy when they go to the home and have fun at their stays. One parent said, 'I honestly do not think we would be able to stay together as a family without the respite care.'

Children's friendships are encouraged. Staff help children to understand how to have positive friendships. The manager arranges stays for children who are friends on the same dates. A parent said that because their child had stays at the same time as his friend, he now has a best friend.

Children take part in a range of activities that they enjoy including day trips, bowling, and visits to parks and activities at the home such as arts, puzzles and playing with slime. The children benefit from these fun and enriching experiences.

Staff encourage children to develop independent living skills. The staff help children to learn to manage personal care and develop important life skills at an appropriate level. Two children have passed their wheelchair driving test. This has given them increased freedom and independence.

The home is spacious and well decorated. Children's bedrooms meet a range of needs. There is a large garden with specialist play equipment for children to enjoy. However, the fence to the front of the property needs attention and it detracts from an otherwise well-kept home.

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

Children are safeguarded effectively. The manager has ensured that the staff have safeguarding training and that they understand safeguarding procedures. A social worker

and parents are impressed with the quality of safeguarding. The staff are confident and well equipped to manage safeguarding incidents.

The manager has ensured that risk assessments and behaviour support plans for children are individualised. Regularly-reviewed risk assessments give staff clear information about identified risks and how to safely manage them. One child had an accident on his scooter. Staff managed this well. The manager consulted with the child and family and agreed more measures to help reduce the risks to the child. There have been no further accidents.

There has been one allegation. The manager dealt with the allegation promptly and took appropriate action. The allegation was concluded efficiently and did not leave the child vulnerable. The manager worked closely with relevant professionals. Working in a joined-up way helps keep children safe.

There have been three low-level physical interventions. These have been appropriate and necessary. Children are encouraged and helped to express how they feel. The manager ensures staff are debriefed. However not all staff have up-to-date physical intervention refresher training.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is very experienced, has a wealth of knowledge and holds a relevant managerial qualification. She is an excellent role model to the staff. She provides excellent care for children. Staff are enthusiastic and caring and provide child-centred care.

The staff have healthcare training from a specialist nurse to meet children's complex health needs. The nurse said that the staff are very competent. The staff have achieved a relevant diploma or are working towards the qualification within agreed timescales. High-quality training means that staff have the tools and knowledge to provide individualised, informed care.

A social worker said that they are very impressed with the care provided. She said that staff understand the child's complex health needs and have had additional training. The manager is very flexible with the child's stays at the home and often offers additional stays.

All staff said that the manager is supportive and approachable. Staff have regular and effective supervision meetings. Supervision provides the staff with a range of learning goals and monitors their professional development.

The manager has good internal monitoring systems. These include regular feedback from parents and children. The manager received feedback from several parents that day and tea visits to the home could be extended. She has acted on the feedback and extended the duration of these visits. Being open to regular feedback, means continuous improvements for parents and children's experiences can be made.

The independent person's reports are of good quality and include a good range of feedback from children, parents and social workers. The independent person makes appropriate recommendations. These help the manager to make improvements to the quality of care that children receive. However, there have been some delays in sending the reports to Ofsted.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing environment. In particular, ensure that the front entrance to the home and fencing to the front of the home are well maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate physical intervention training to support their training needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that monitoring reports by the independent person are submitted to Ofsted without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55 paragraph 10.24)

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: SC033120

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Luton Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Teresa Hills

Registered manager: Christine Ali

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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