

SC033120

Registered provider: Luton Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority-run home provides short breaks and respite for children and young people. The home's ethos is to provide a high-quality safe service that respects children's dignity and privacy and wishes and feelings.

The manager has been registered at this home since July 2011.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 February 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: 12 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/12/2017	Full	Good
10/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/07/2016	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child's interests and hobbies; and that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies. (Regulation (9)(1)(2)(a)(i)(b))	31/03/2019
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, ensure that staff are trained in safeguarding and the safe use of restraint.	30/04/2019
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.	31/05/2019

The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the behaviour management policy') which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;	31/03/2019

the name of the person who used the measure ('the user'), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children make good progress because of the care and support that they receive. Their social and independence skills improve. Staff have supported a child to manage their behaviour more positively by changing the child's routine, improving communication with the child and reducing noise and activity levels around them. Staff have supported another child to use the toilet independently. Children develop skills that will need as they become more independent.

Admissions are managed carefully. During the inspection, a child had a tea visit in advance of moving on to overnight stays. The staff managed the interactions sensitively during this visit. The child was warmly welcomed and helped to settle. This approach helps children to build relationships with the staff who will care for them.

The manager and staff have a good awareness and understanding of the children's complex needs and the plans for their care and support. Staff consistently spoke about wanting the best for the children. It is apparent that staff take time to form good relationships with children and to lead by example. A parent said, 'I am very happy with the way that the staff are taking their time to ensure that when [my child] does come to have overnight stays, she is ready. All of the staff have been fantastic. They are all very competent.'

Care and support planning records are well organised, detailed and helpful. Records

contain good information and provide a unique picture of each child. The staff understand the children well. The staff use their knowledge carefully to think about what events and behaviours mean in order to help children progress.

The home is pleasantly decorated and furnished throughout to meet the children's complex needs. The staff have worked hard to add warmth and special touches to the decor. The garden has an abundance of activities and play equipment to enhance the children's fun, learning and development.

Children enjoy trips to local parks in the local community and spending time at the home doing arts and crafts and playing games. However, the home does not promote new experiences and interests for some children who come to stay because staff do not prepare any activities in advance for the child's visit. The manager and staff were unable to clarify why pre-planned activities had not taken place. Not all children's interests outside the home are catered for.

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

There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. The staff do not use sanctions. Staff de-escalate challenging behaviour well. Physical restraint is infrequent and only used when necessary. However, managers have not ensured that staff have had consistent training in restraint; more than one approach to restraint is used. This has the potential to be confusing for children and staff. Lack of current training means that staff may not have the skills that they need to manage some behaviours.

There are shortfalls in the records of incidents of restraint. Some information is missing and details of debriefings with children and staff are incomplete. Lack of clear recording makes it difficult to monitor the effectiveness of physical intervention and to understand whether lessons can be learned to inform future practice.

There are gaps in safeguarding training for some staff. Despite this, all members of staff spoken to during the inspection had a good understanding of safeguarding practice. They understand their responsibility to protect children from abuse and confidently described reporting procedures. Staff are fully aware of the roles of external agencies and spoke with confidence about their organisation's whistle-blowing policy.

The staff understand the children's vulnerabilities and consider specific individual risks. Formal risk assessment procedures are well managed. Records reflect the strategies that the staff use to keep children safe. Regular reviews of risk assessments, behaviour management plans and strategies ensure that risk management remains current and proactive. Consequently, children benefit from staying in a safe environment.

Good staffing levels reduce the chance of incidents occurring. Consistent daily routines and one-to-one supervision help to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leadership is consistent and provided by a qualified and experienced manager. She has been in post since 2011. The manager brings a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the role. She is respected and valued by staff, who benefit from her supportive leadership. She leads by example through her involvement in all aspects of the day-to-day running of the home.

The manager offers good support to the staff. She leads a staff team that is very experienced in caring for children who have complex needs. The manager is accessible and approachable. When necessary, she provides practical support. Regular team meetings ensure that children are discussed in detail and that they remain the focus of practice.

Supervision sessions cover a wide range of topics that are relevant to individual staff member's needs. Staff benefit from annual appraisals. However, one member of staff has not completed a relevant level 3 qualification in the required timescale.

The manager has monitoring and review systems in place. This ensures oversight of the progress that children are making.

Leaders and managers acknowledged the shortfalls that were highlighted during this inspection. They began to implement measures to improve children's safety in respect of restraint and safeguarding training in response to the inspection findings. The manager stated that the next child referred to the home who may require physical restraint will not be admitted until the staff are fully trained in all areas of restraint and safeguarding.

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

Cathy Russell: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019