

SC033152

Registered provider: North Lincolnshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority service provides care during short breaks for up to six children who may have a learning disability. This includes those with additional complex health needs and/or autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on the 17 March 2020.

The home was last inspected in December 2019.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 October 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 3 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
17/04/2018	Full	Good
10/10/2017	Full	Outstanding
26/01/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children experience lots of fun and activities on their visits to the home. They are very well supported by staff who know them extremely well. The staff are nurturing and fully committed to ensuring that children feel at home, settled and enjoying their stay.

The staff team are vastly experienced in supporting disabled children. They are very knowledgeable about each child and attuned to their needs. Staff endeavour to understand children's views and ensure that children are consulted from the time they arrive at the home.

Staff make good use of a range of child-friendly resources to assist communication. For example, Makaton, picture exchange systems and social stories are used to help children pick what they would like to eat or what activities they would like to do during their stays. As a result, children are able to express their views and are fully consulted about their care.

Children participate in lots of positive activities during their stays. The home environment is child focused, and as a result, the children are able to enjoy activities such as arts and crafts, trampolining, listening to music and messy play in the 'mud kitchen' in the garden. These activities enable the children to develop positive friendships with their peers and experience opportunities which they may not be able to access with their families.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff provided outreach support to the children and their families. This support ensured that children and families who could not access the home were being supported in the community, reducing isolation throughout the pandemic. The staff worked effectively with schools, professionals and families to ensure that the holistic care needs of the children were still being met.

Staff focus on helping children to progress through a variety of experiences that enhance their social, emotional and physical development. This helps the children to have increased independence. This means that children's confidence and resilience grow as a result of these experiences.

The children are encouraged to try new experiences. They have agreed targets for independence that are reviewed regularly. When children achieve their targets their successes are celebrated and rewarded. This means that the children feel valued.

The children and their families are consulted before admission to the home and after each stay at the home. Staff carry out daily consultations, children's meetings, one-to-one sessions with the children and seek feedback from families, which enables

them to have a say in how the home is run. This ensures that children's and families' views and opinions are actively sought and valued.

The staff have a vast knowledge of the complex health needs of the children. Staff support children to have their health needs met effectively by working in partnership with specialist health professionals and families, and by developing their knowledge through specialist training and research. This increased knowledge helps to ensure that children receive the support that they need to have their health and developmental needs met effectively.

Professionals told the inspector that the service is 'amazing' and that it provides 'highly individualised care for children and families'. Other comments include that the service is 'flexible' and is a 'crucial part' of the one team approach to meeting the needs of children with disabilities. This means that children and their families can access support when they need it and that this approach has prevented families from breaking down.

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

The home has had only one safeguarding incident since the last inspection. The manager ensured lessons were learned and, as a result, continued to improve systems to fully safeguard the children during their stay. These systems include checks with health professionals, social workers, families and schools. As a result of these improved systems, the children's needs are well understood, before and during their stays.

Admissions are managed extremely well by staff. The staff visit children in their homes before they are admitted to the home. Staff start to build trusting relationships with the children and their families, schools and other professionals, at the point of allocation to the service. This enables the staff to have robust risk assessments already in place before a child's first stay. These risk assessments are reviewed before and after each stay to help protect the children.

Before their stay, the compatibility of children is considered very carefully. This enables the staff to support children to have stays alongside peers that they know well. This helps to ensure that children are surrounded by familiar people and a consistent staff team during their stays.

The staff are very experienced, driven and child focused. They are extremely resilient, and together with the manager, they work to find resources to help keep children protected during their stays. Risk assessments are continually reviewed, extremely clear and have robust management oversight. This means that staff can respond effectively and instantly when the children are unable to regulate their emotions.

The staff access specialist and bespoke training in addition to mandatory training. This supports them in their roles and enables them to support the children to begin

to manage their emotional and behavioural needs. For example, staff have introduced a 'feelings thermometer' for children. This helps the children, both with verbal and non-verbal communication skills, to understand their feelings and emotions.

Physical intervention is only used when all other interventions have been exhausted and the welfare of the children and staff are at risk. The staff use their individual knowledge, experience and understanding of the triggers of the children's behaviours to enable them to work restoratively with the children. This helps children to return to manage their emotions and re-engage with the positive ethos within the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager of the home is aspirational for the service, children, their families and her staff. She and her management team demonstrate excellent leadership qualities for her staff team. She encourages the staff to be inventive and creative in their practice. This helps to improve the quality of the children's stays at the home.

The manager provides the staff with bespoke training and personal development opportunities. She also uses monthly supervision, quarterly appraisals and team meetings as areas to improve the knowledge and experience of the staff. This means that staff have effective development plans which ensures children receive individualised care and attention.

The manager has excellent oversight of the home. She ensures that care plans are updated systematically by key workers. She uses the whole staff team to help ensure that care plans are robust and reflect the changing care needs of each individual child. All the children have clear development targets in their care plans, and these are supported by effective direct work with the children. This means that the children are able to enjoy positive experiences and develop in every aspect of their lives.

The manager ensures that her staff work in partnership with all agencies effectively. She has provided opportunities for staff to experience outreach work and support other teams in the community to enrich their experience and understanding of other professional roles. This resourceful way of developing staff enriches the quality of care children are afforded.

The manager actively challenges senior managers and other professionals when there are resource shortfalls or clear needs, to help safeguard the children in her care. This approach has enabled children who have high-level and complex needs to continue to access the service.

Professionals said that the manager and the staff team are very experienced in their field. They share good practice with other agencies in order to provide children with excellent continuity of care in all their environments.

Parents told the inspector that the care provided by the manager and staff has enabled them to focus on the needs of their families. They know that their children are safe and will be enjoying a fun time. They receive excellent communication and are involved in their children's care plans.

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: SC033152

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Church Square House, 30-40 Church Square,
Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN15 6NL

Responsible individual: Darren Chaplin

Registered manager: Johanna Haynes

Inspector

Noel Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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