

SC034797

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority and provides short breaks for up to four children who have experienced trauma. Emergency placements are also offered for children who have similar needs.

At the time of this inspection, one child was having a short break at the home.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2026

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: 19 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2024	Full	Good
22/08/2023	Full	Good
12/07/2022	Full	Good
30/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, 14 children were being supported on a rotational basis by this short-break service. 2 children have also been supported in an emergency capacity for short periods of time.

Staff work collaboratively with professional's, children's outreach workers, and families to provide a team around the child. Staff work with professionals to identify early intervention and strategies to support children. Strategies are implemented well by the manager and staff. This support has enabled children to receive the help and intervention needed to remain living at home while receiving respite stays. As a result, children have made progress from their starting points.

Staff provide care that is individualised and supports the complex needs of the children who come for breaks. Relationships between staff and children are warm, trusting, and receptive. Children value their short breaks and the support offered by staff. One child said, 'Everything is perfect, the staff are amazing, I have my favourites of course, but I have so much fun, we do loads, they listen and are there for me.'

Children's views are central to the home. Staff support children to share their views each time they visit through consultation and key-work sessions. The manager and staff use the feedback from children to support improvements to the home. This approach helps children to feel listened to.

Children benefit from enriching activities with staff and other children. These include regular trips to play pool, cinema trips, trampolining, going to the seaside, and magnet fishing. Staff create thoughtful memory books for the children to capture their experiences. This approach supports children to have enjoyable experiences and share memories with others.

The home is welcoming and decorated to a high standard. Purposefully thought-out areas include a well-equipped beauty room, a games room and an art studio. Bedrooms are themed and children pick their bedrooms at the start of each visit. This supports children to have meaningful experiences at the home.

When children have moved into the home in an emergency following a crisis in their lives, staff welcome the children positively and assess risks quickly. The manager and staff work with professionals to ensure that the children's needs are understood and met. Children are supported to settle in, and staff creatively support children with daily routines and educational engagement. Children are helped to prepare for longer-term living arrangements. As a result of this approach children positively move on to suitable long-term placements.

Some children have not been able to access the home due to the home operating as an emergency placement. The staff delivered outreach support to children to provide continuity of care. However, some children who regularly visited the home for short breaks did not understand why they were unable to visit. Information in the children's guide does not provide children with the full scope or description of the service.

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

There have been some incidents when children have gone missing from the home. The staff act quickly and follow the children's missing-from-care protocols. They search for the child and communicate with the local police until the child is found. When the manager has identified potential triggers and causes to why children have left, additional measures are implemented by staff to prevent recurrence.

Staff use physical intervention at times to keep children and themselves safe. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention and use this as a last resort. After physical interventions, staff offer medical attention and check on children's emotional wellbeing. Managers review each incident record and talk to children and staff about what has happened.

When children have struggled to manage their emotions, staff have responded effectively offering support. Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs, their behaviours, and potential triggers for them. Individualised plans are in place to guide staff to support children's behaviours.

Staff explore a range of topics with the children during planned key-work sessions. Topics discussed are important to the children and include the risks they face. Children engage well in these conversations. As a result, children have a better understanding of risks and how to reduce these.

Leaders and manager's complete thorough and detailed risk assessments prior to children coming to the home. These focus on the impact of children accessing the services and whether their needs can be met alongside the needs of the existing children. This ensures that the dynamics are suitable and children accessing the service benefit from their time.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The previous registered manager left in January 2025, however the manager has continued to work to support the new manager's induction. The new manager was appointed and registered with Ofsted in September 2025.

A permanent, suitably experienced manager manages the home effectively and efficiently. Staff describe the manager as highly supportive and encouraging. This support has enabled staff to feel enthused by their work and deliver a high level of care to the children.

Many staff have worked in the home for a number of years and form a long-standing team. Newer staff members are supported to work through a well-thought out induction supported by experienced staff. As a result, newer staff build the confidence and skills to work effectively with children.

Staff benefit from a good range of training to support them to have the skills that they need to meet the children's individual needs.

Team meetings are regular and well structured. The content of meetings includes discussion and reflection on the care provided. Good quality team meetings help staff to provide consistent and well-informed care.

Professionals and parents involved with the home provide positive feedback about the manager and staff. One professional said, 'I am so impressed by the level and quality of support provided to [name of child], the support is contributing significantly to the stability of her family care arrangements.

Staff benefit from supervision sessions that focus on wellbeing and reflection. Children are discussed in detail. However, not all staff have had supervisions at the frequency promised. This does not ensure that all staff receive the same opportunities to regularly discuss their practice.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations', including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2')
- The registered person must ensure the children's guide contains information that children accessing short break's may be disrupted due to the need of emergency placements. The children's guide must be made available to all children when their placement in the home is agreed (or on arrival at the home if the placement is made in an emergency) and must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: SC034797

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2DH

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Emily Sewell

Inspector

Syvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector

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