

SC034969

Registered provider: Nottingham City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have emotional, behavioural and/or social difficulties.

There is an experienced manager who registered with Ofsted in 2013.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 July 2025

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 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/08/2024	Full	Good
22/01/2024	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Good
28/02/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children have moved on since the last inspection. One child moved on very successfully to a new provision as they were prepared well. They made very good progress while living at the home, particularly with educational achievements. One child returned to family prematurely and remained there. The provider fulfilled their duty of care to the child until their placement ended. One child has been at the home for a considerable time and is making slow progress. Attempts to help them improve their quality of life are not yet fully effective. The child has made some 'small steps', which are being encouraged by staff.

Two children have settled well. This is due to careful consideration of their needs and good preparation for them moving in. There has already been an improvement in some areas of their lives. For example, children are building relationships with staff, whereas this has been difficult for them in previous provisions.

Children are at different stages with their education. One child has continued to struggle to attend school this year despite the strategies implemented by the manager and staff. However, they did complete some GCSE exams, and a college course is in place for the new term. It is anticipated that the child will find it difficult to attend regularly. A plan is in place to motivate them as much as possible. The two new children are settling into their education provisions and attending on some days. Staff use praise and rewards to help children increase their attendance.

Staff support children to attend health appointments and accept support when they are unwell. Managers refer children to external professionals, such as mental health services, when they need additional support. Children do not always accept the help offered. Consequently, there is a need for staff to undertake direct work which is effective with children. Staff are undertaking a sleep hygiene course imminently so they can help all three children who struggle to sleep through the night.

Children have positive relationships with staff and enjoy spending time with them as well as with their friends. Children are encouraged to do activities and there is a holiday booked for the summer. This helps children to have new experiences and build social skills. Where possible, children see people who are important to them. Time with family is reviewed regularly to ensure that relationships are sustained. This is important to help sustain children's sense of identity and their sense of belonging.

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

The managers and staff have been required to manage some serious contextual safeguarding risks for one child. These risks were present when the child moved in. The team worked well with other agencies, including the police, to ensure they fulfilled their safeguarding role. This kept the child as safe as possible from the risks they were exposed to. The team responds effectively when children are missing from home. They

make regular calls to children and work with other professionals and family to ensure they come home. There has been success in reducing incidents of going missing for one child, which has increased their safety. Staff are currently working with another child to stay at home more at nighttime. This is starting to have an impact.

Staff support children well when they become overwhelmed by their feelings. They do this without the need for physical intervention. Staff set proportionate boundaries to help them understand safe and acceptable behaviour. Children who have previously displayed behaviours that pose a risk of harm are receiving support from external agencies to help them understand risks and impact. For example, one child is learning about the risks associated with carrying knives.

Children say they can speak to staff about their worries and know how to make a complaint if necessary. There have been no complaints or allegations of harm from children or professionals since the last inspection.

Direct work has been undertaken with children to address concerns relating to substance misuse. It is not yet effective in helping children to change this behaviour. This is important for general health reasons. In particular, it is impacting on one child's sleep routine.

Staff undertake room searches when there are concerns about harmful items or substances. These are conducted at pertinent times and recorded clearly. Children are informed of these where possible. There is management oversight to ensure the searches are conducted in a sensitive way.

New members of staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Overall, the relevant vetting processes were followed. However, there was a discrepancy in the information collated which had not been identified. Consequently, the existing recommendation regarding safe recruitment is restated. The manager recognises the importance of having continued oversight of all stages of vetting procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a stable management team whose members have good oversight of the home. They are aware of strengths and areas for development. Managers have strong relationships with children, who seek them out to have a chat or share a joke with. Children know they can rely on managers to advocate for their needs.

The manager has recruited a diverse staff team whose members enjoy working at the home. Many of the staff have worked at the home for a long time and know the children well. They speak about them fondly and are proud of their achievements.

Staff receive regular mandatory training and access some specialist courses to refresh their skills. The manager recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff complete a range of courses to keep their knowledge and practice up to date. The manager has decided to implement individual development plans so that learning is an ongoing and dynamic process rather than a series of isolated events.

The team is well supported through the supervision and appraisal process. Staff can discuss personal and professional issues and are offered help where needed. New staff are welcomed and have a positive induction.

Managers work effectively with other agencies and request additional assessments for children where identified needs arise. They challenge other professionals where practice falls short of their expectations and escalate concerns where appropriate. Children are regularly consulted about their care. Staff support them to attend important meetings so they can take part in decision-making forums. This shows children they are valued and respected.

Independent visitors attend the home every month as this is a regulatory requirement. However, they are not always spending time with children. This limits opportunities to build relationships with children and ascertain their views about the home in a meaningful way.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being to enhance and supplement that provided by their school through personal, social and health education. Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered person should lead a team which provides high-quality care for all children living in the home. They must lead and manage the home in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the home's statement of purpose. This includes supporting children to have consistent sleep routines so they can take part in their daily lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should ensure ongoing good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This includes checking references against dates of employment to ensure they are correct. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This includes spending time with children and recording their views about the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: SC034969

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Nottingham City Council

Registered provider address: Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham,
Nottinghamshire NG2 3NG

Responsible individual: Kay Sutt

Registered manager: Berardino Labbate

Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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M1 2WD

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