

SC036240

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to six children and young people who need support with emotional and/or behavioural problems.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 February 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 9 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/11/2021	Full	Good
15/04/2019	Full	Good
01/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
17/07/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The home has been recently redecorated and feels like a family home. Children have been involved in choosing the decoration of their bedrooms and these reflect their personalities. The manager has been proactive to change the function of shared spaces to better suit the needs of the children. Children now have multiple communal spaces where they can relax, and this has helped them to feel settled.

Care plans are thorough, updated regularly and evidence that children are understood well. Staff engage children in age-appropriate activities and younger children are given opportunities to imaginatively play. Staff respond to children in a warm and affectionate way. Children seek out hugs from staff which are readily offered. Consequently, children are building trusting relationships with staff members.

Children are engaged in education. The manager advocates well for a full-time return to school for several children, recognising they have the potential to succeed. The home should remain proactive to ensure that educational activities are structured for children when they are not attending school or receiving tuition.

The home has a separate living space where older children can be prepared for their independence. This space is highly valued by the child living there and they feel well supported by the staff. There is not however a structured plan to track the child's readiness for independence. As a result, planning for the child's future is disjointed and staff are not clear on required tasks to complete with the child.

Staff are not consistently seeking the views and wishes of children. Children are not offered the opportunity to de-brief following significant incidences and they do not receive regular key work sessions. Therefore, children are not able to influence the care they receive at the home or to share their feelings.

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

Risk assessments offer a good level of detail and are personal to children. Staff understand the behaviours of the children they care for and can recognise triggers to behaviours. Staff follow proactive measures to keep children safe, such as noting down what children are wearing when they leave the home. Children currently living at the home share that they feel safe and can identify staff they can approach with concerns.

Risk assessments identify the importance of talking with children following significant incidences or risk-taking behaviours. Staff do not adhere to this advice

and follow up conversations are not always taking place. There are missed opportunities for children and staff to reflect and learn following incidents. Children are not always emotionally supported following difficult periods at the home.

There are clear plans to manage risk where children are missing from care. Children currently living at the home rarely go missing. This has however been a concern for children previously. Responses to missing episodes have been inconsistent by staff, with advised actions to keep children safe not always being followed. Written reports lack detail and staff are not inquisitive about where children have been or how they feel. As a consequence, the home is not able to identify patterns of behaviour or support children to not go missing again.

Physical intervention is used rarely for children living at the home. Where restraints have been used these are proportionate and for a minimum amount of time. Recordings do not always evidence efforts to de-escalate situations and they lacked the wider context of the incident. Children are not offered time to talk with staff following being held. Children are not reassured by staff that they are safe or to understand why the actions were taken.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Children benefit from a consistent team working at the home. The staff are mutually supportive and trusting of each other. Staff enjoy working at the home and speak highly of the children they care for. The manager is well liked by the children and is sought out by them for regular chats and support.

Staff report feeling well supported by management. This support is largely informal, and staff are not being offered regular structured supervision or team meetings. Staff are not therefore able to explore their wellbeing or discuss children in a consistent way. Opportunities for learning and development, especially from incidents, are being missed.

There is a lack of management oversight across recordings in the home. Staff are not therefore offered clear guidance about their practice or how incidents could be handled differently moving forward. The acting manager is reflective and honest about the current practice and why this needs to improve. She is aspirational for the development of the team and has plans to deliver the improvements required.

Since the new manager started there has been improved tracking of the progress children are making within the home. This is not yet fully embedded into practice. Previously, auditing and quality assurance of the home has not been sufficient. As a result, the manager does not have effective oversight of the home.

The manager has not provided Ofsted with updates of the home's functioning, in line with the regulations. This does not allow Ofsted to have a full overview of the home or be assured that necessary safeguarding procedures are being followed.

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 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)) This specifically refers to ensuring that records of incidents are clear, detailed and demonstrate management oversight, reflection, and learning.	01/03/2023
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This particularly refers to supervision of staff taking place in line with the home's statement of purpose.	01/03/2023
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI; (Regulation 44 (1) and (7) (a)) This specifically refers to independent visitor reports not being received by HMCI every month.	01/03/2023

Reg 45 The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b) and (5)) This particularly refers to ensuring there is a suitable monitoring system in place and that reports are completed at least every 6 months and sent to HMCI within 28 days.	01/03/2023
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings. This particularly relates to children being offered time to reflect after incidents and keywork sessions. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff consistently encourage children to engage in educational activity. Particularly where children are not attending formal education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have opportunities to learn and reflect together, particularly through access to team meetings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)

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: SC036240

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Derby City Council, Treasurers Department, Council House, Corporation Street, DERBY, DE1 2FE

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Louise Copping, Social Care Inspector

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