

SC036240

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to six children who require support with social and emotional difficulties.

There are currently two children living at the home.

Inspection date: 9 January 2024

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified no serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children are making good progress. For one child, the manager has been a strong advocate and has supported a specialist school provision to be secured. Another child is being supported to access school on a reduced timetable. This is meeting the child's needs and helping him to make progress with his learning.

Children and staff have warm and trusting relationships. This has helped one child to feel more settled at the home and professionals state that he has grown in confidence as a result.

Children have opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings through regular one-to-one sessions with staff and during children's meetings. This is allowing space for children to be supported following any incidents and providing them with the required debriefs. Additionally, children can influence the care they receive from staff. This is helping them to feel more settled in their home. Children have identified that they would benefit from a separate space where they can use the computer and play games. The manager has responded to this request quickly.

Conditions in the home are good. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their tastes and interests. Improvements are being made to communal areas for these to feel more homely and inviting spaces for children.

Children receive the support they need when moving into or out of the home. One child was supported to move successfully into independent living through the nurturing relationships they had with trusted staff. The manager and staff give careful thought to how children can live together. For example, prior to moving in, one child was supported to spend time with his peers in the home before the actual move.

Children are helped and kept safe because staff have completed good, individualised risk assessments for children. These guide staff on how best to approach and respond to children's presenting behaviours. Children's vulnerabilities are documented in an accessible way for staff, including measures to increase the safety of children in certain circumstances. The staff are vigilant. They understand children's risks and vulnerabilities and how to respond in a manner that keeps the children safe.

The manager undertakes to review all incidents of concern to ensure children's safety and well-being. This oversight is excellent. All the relevant documentation is well organised, and this helps to provide an account of what happened during an incident and the actions that staff took. The manager and staff liaise effectively with

external professionals to ensure that the risks to children are understood and there are plans in place to keep children safe.

The manager has taken a proactive approach to staff development. This has included strengthening the training and development opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and understanding of care practice. Where shortfalls have been identified in relation to staff knowledge and development, plans have been put in place to rectify this and provide staff with the training and development opportunities they need. This develops staff learning and helps to keep children safe.

Good planning by the manager has enabled meaningful team meetings to take place and with increasing frequency. Staff have individual supervision sessions with the manager. These are of good quality and mean that staff have felt supported to express their views and opinions and develop their practice.

The home is visited monthly by an independent visitor. The subsequent reports are provided to Ofsted but do not always include required consultation with the children, parents or other involved professionals. This means the independent scrutiny of the care offered at the home is not to an acceptable level.

The home does not have a registered manager. The requirement made at the last inspection has been restated and is subject to a compliance notice. The registration of the manager with Ofsted is a crucial regulatory requirement.

Not all staff working in the home have achieved the required qualification in a timely way. However, managers have plans in place to address this.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/11/2021	Full	Good
15/04/2019	Full	Good

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, The 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 registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b)) This specifically refers to there being no registered manager in position since March 2022.	6 February 2024
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and	6 February 2024

to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.

The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—

children are effectively safeguarded; and

the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.
(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b))

This specifically refers to ensuring that the independent visitor's reports include consultation with stakeholders and have clear statements about the safety of children in the home.

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- All staff in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC036240

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Registered provider address: The Council house, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FS

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Louise Copping, Social Care Inspector
Chris Haines, Social Care Inspector

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