

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.

There are currently five children living at the home.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 July 2024

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: 24 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children present as comfortable living at the home. Children have warm and positive relationships with staff. Children seek affection such as hugs from staff and these are naturally reciprocated. The manager ensures there is appropriate scrutiny prior to the admission of children into the home and thinks carefully about the dynamics amongst children at the home. One child spoke positively about their recent move to the home; they enjoy going out on activities with staff and the opportunity to build their independence in the community.

Since the last inspection, staff have worked hard to make changes to the home to improve children's living conditions. The home now has a cosy and welcoming feel. Children have been consulted about the changes they would like made and their bedrooms are well decorated and personalised. The manager is aware of improvements still required to develop the home further. The timeliness of repairs is however reliant on local authority processes, which can build in some delay.

Staff support and advocate for children to be in education. Children engage in either full time or alternative provisions. One child has been supported to maintain her school placement which is some distance from the home. This has provided consistency and a positive ending for the child as they prepare for a move to Secondary School. Another child who was previously home-schooled has been supported to access a school for the first time in several years. This has broadened the child's learning and social networks, and they are flourishing as a consequence of this.

Staff recognise the importance of family time for children. Staff listen to the wishes and feelings of children and support children to see people who are important to them. For one child they have worked closely with another home to nurture a sibling relationship which is valued by the child. Another child is seeing their father for the first time in several years. Staff recognise the significance of these relationships, especially as children work towards independence.

Children have the opportunity to share their views and feelings through regular one to one discussions and children's meetings. The manager recognises that children have struggled to engage in collaborative feedback about their care and is looking at alternative ways to capture their opinion more effectively such as through a computerised system. Staff value children's voices and children work openly with staff that they trust, however, these conversations are not always reflected fully in recordings.

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

Children have bespoke assessments in place which inform staff of identified risks and how to respond. As a result staff have a good understanding of the needs of children and can respond to challenging behaviours effectively. Staff are proactive to reflect with

children following incidents and offer opportunities for learning. Risk assessments consider how children's behaviours may influence other children at the home and identify the potential impact especially for younger children.

Children have on occasion, been restrained at the home. Staff work to de-escalate situations and prevent the need for physical intervention. Where these have occurred, these are proportionate to keep children and staff safe. When children go missing from the home, staff work swiftly to search the local area and places where the child is likely to frequent. Consequently children are quickly returned to the home. Staff and managers are making use of a commissioned psychologist to reflect on incidents and how these can be reduced. This is lessening the need for police intervention to manage children's behaviours. Similarly, bespoke restraint training is helping staff to identify triggers for individual children and reduce escalation of their behaviours.

The manager understands the need to consider complaints and allegations thoroughly. When a recent allegation was made by children the manager worked swiftly to explore this and liaised appropriately with external agencies. Steps were taken to safeguard children until a full investigation could take place. Children know how to complain and are always provided with the outcomes of their complaint. Children understand that their concerns are taken seriously by the Manager and acted upon where necessary.

Children in the home do take medication. One child is being appropriately supported to manage this independently. There have been a number of medication errors. These have been thoroughly investigated and action has been taken to ensure that no children have come to harm. The manager has used learning from these errors to ensure that there is a robust system in place for the handling and administration of children's medication.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management team are aspirational for children. Feedback from staff and professionals was consistently positive about the registered manager and spoke of her commitment and advocacy for children. The manager understands the strengths and areas for development at the home. She has ambitious plans for the home and how this will be supported by staff practice.

The manager has developed audit tools that enable good oversight of the home and the lived experiences of children. Some of these processes are newly developed and are not yet fully imbedded into practice. The manager has begun to focus on empowering staff in their practice. There has been a recent focus on the development of one to one discussions and other written records at the home. The manager is committed to ensuring that staff understand these as an important part of children's life story.

Staff are offered regular supervisions and team meetings. Staff feel well supported by the manager who ensures these remain spaces where staff can contribute to the changes at the home and learn together. Supervisions have an appropriate balance of exploring both staff welfare and the safeguarding of children in their care. Recent clinical supervisions are helping staff to identify their strengths and how these can be best

utilised. Where there are concerns about practice these are addressed quickly by the manager and development plans implemented. These are appropriately reviewed with clear actions for staff to work towards.

The manager has developed an effective system to track staff training, but this does not include information of training that well established staff have completed historically. Staff have not yet been able to access specialist training in autism and working with children with learning difficulties. It is important that staff are offered training which will support the care of children in a timely way.

Managers have been proactive to ensure that staff are accessing the needed qualifications and are encouraging and supportive of staff to complete this. Whilst some progress has been made, not all staff have completed this within the required timescales.

The home is regularly visited by an independent visitor and a regulation 44 report is produced. This report has not always been submitted to Ofsted in a timely way. This appears to be because of a system error at the local authority and therefore outside of the control of the manager. The manager must ensure that the report includes an appropriate level of information that has assured the visitor that children are safe at the home.

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 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 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— (a) children are effectively safeguarded; and (b) the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4) (a)(b) and (7)(a)) This specifically refers to ensuring independent visitor's reports are shared with Ofsted in a timely way and include details as to how children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted.	06 August 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.11)

- 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)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping, and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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, The Council house, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FS

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Cheryl Lawrence

Inspector(s)

Louise Copping, social care inspector
Netsai Muzuva, social care inspector

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