

SC036262

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this home which provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The age range of young people is 11 to 18. The home is led by an interim manager who has recently applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
02/10/2017	Full	Outstanding
08/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/11/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- The home should play a full part in promoting the best interests of the child, proactively advocating for the child to ensure that others play their role and deliver the high quality support that is needed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.4)
- When a child needs additional health or well-being support, staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological or psychiatric support required, and challenge them through regulation 5 - engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met, if this does not happen. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Well-considered placement matching and introductions to the home enable children to settle quickly and to feel safe and secure. They are happy in this home. Equally, moving out of the home is well thought out. Young adults who have moved out and are living independently continue to be supported by staff, and one young person has successfully secured an apprenticeship.

Managers have implemented a 'no office' policy. Instead, they have study rooms. This is a recent policy and, therefore, is still in the early stages of being used. However, it provides children with the freedom to go anywhere in their own home but also respect the privacy of adults when confidential discussions are taking place. This open and inclusive culture means that there are no incidents of children trying to force their way into the office or feeling 'left out' or rejected because of a locked office door.

Education is part of the ethos of the home. It is equally valued by children and adults. Carefully targeted interventions for children who were previously struggling with going to school have resulted in children now attending school every day and wanting to go on to complete exams. However, one child is not currently educated in a school because the school has said that it is currently unable to have him there. This matter is being addressed but has been allowed to drift.

Children's health is promoted. Children participate in a range of activities that involve exercise and they eat a healthy diet. Staff liaise with healthcare professionals, including mental health services. However, one child requires a special type of therapy, which has not yet been secured. The delay in accessing this therapy means that the emotional health of the child is not being fully addressed and he is unable to attend school. The

manager has provided some challenge to external professionals, but he has not strongly advocated on behalf of the child.

Staff help children to rebuild significant relationships, such as those with their parents, if appropriate. For example, the manager uses the home's budget to pay for an after-school club for one child's sister so that the child's mother can spend time with him.

The home is relatively well maintained. The manager plans to involve children in some of the refurbishment of the kitchen and bathroom. One child has created a plan for the garden and is working on developing this area. He successfully grew fruit and vegetables in the garden over the summer. Helping with general maintenance and gardening will enhance the life skills of children.

Children have a good understanding of the therapeutic model used in the home. They have even helped to develop a poster to demonstrate the model and a child-friendly version. Their views and opinions are encouraged and valued.

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

The use of a therapeutic model in the home is extremely effective in supporting children to understand and regulate their own behaviour. There is a visual guide in the study area and a further child-friendly version, which is used to help children to understand their thoughts and feelings. This has made an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of children in the home.

There is an open and inclusive culture, which is underpinned by nurturing and trusting relationships between the adults and the children. A social worker commented that a child had been 'trusted' to have a mobile phone to keep in touch while on holiday and that this had a significant, positive effect on the child's perception of themselves.

Incidents have dramatically reduced over the last few years, and there have been no serious incidents, children going missing or safeguarding concerns since the last inspection. This emphasises the outstanding care that the children receive at the home. Children feel safe, secure, trusted and respected by the adults caring for them.

Children are kept safe in the home. Staff joining the home are subject to robust recruitment checks. The manager has a good oversight of safer recruitment and has recently audited recruitment files to check that all relevant documentation is available. This ensures that risks are minimised, and children are cared for by safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from a knowledgeable, caring and established staff team that shares the ideals and vision of the manager. The management team has been instrumental in implementing a wholly child-centred approach and ethos in the home. This has created a positive and homely atmosphere in which children can thrive. All the children have an individual care and support plan. Staff caring for them have a good understanding of

how to support the child and the management of individual risk factors. Children are encouraged and supported to have consistent routines in relation to their health, education and engagement in positive activities.

The manager and deputy manager are new in post. The manager is suitably qualified and has applied to register with Ofsted. He has high aspirations for children and ensures that they have rich and varied opportunities that help to enhance their life chances. He has a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses, addresses identified shortfalls quickly and has ambitious plans for the future of the home.

Staff have good access to training including specialist training on the therapeutic model the home uses. Most staff are appropriately qualified. Staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver very good care for children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC036262

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Derbyshire County Council, County Offices, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG

Responsible individual: Mary Wilton

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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