

SC036262

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who have emotional and social difficulties.

The manager is experienced and registered.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 25 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
09/10/2019	Full	Good
20/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
02/10/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children living in this home receive exceptionally high-quality care. The staff and children have very good relationships. This means that staff provide highly individualised support and care to each child, which helps children make very good progress in all areas of their development. Staff are motivated, focused and always keen to undertake training. This is because they know this will equip them with the right knowledge and skills to meet each child's unique needs. A key aim of the staff is to ensure that all the children thrive.

The children's life chances are significantly enhanced. For example, none of the children were attending school before moving to the home. Now, all the children are receiving education, achieving their targets and exceeding. Overall, the children make excellent educational progress. Staff provide children with constant praise and reassurance. The staff will use 'well done' cards or points given to children from staff at school to help the children recognise their achievements. This develops children's confidence and self-esteem.

The health needs of the children are very well met. Staff actively respond to any health issues that children may have. The children are all healthy and eat a balanced and varied diet and take regular exercise. For example, one child loves football and plays this most days. The children give their views on the weekly menu options. They also get involved with the cooking and baking, which helps develop some key life skills. Again, this enhances children's relationships with staff, as this is a fun activity.

The manager and staff team are proactive in sourcing the necessary support and help for children from external professional agencies. If the right service cannot be identified, the team is creative and conducts research into what it can provide for the children. Supporting children in this way means that their needs are met. Additionally, children are more likely to achieve better outcomes as they are more likely to develop emotional resilience.

Staff recognise the importance of children continuing to see family members or those close to them when it is safe to do so. The managers and staff work collaboratively with other professionals to enable children to maintain these important relationships. Family members are also welcomed into the home when this is possible. For example, a child's brother and sister came to the home, and staff baked cakes with them all. This helps promote and encourage positive relationships in the child's life. Furthermore, it provides positive memories for the sibling group.

The manager recognises the importance of the children receiving consistent care from a committed staff team. If a shift cannot be covered, then the manager or

deputy will cover it themselves. The culture in the home is one where the children are at the heart of everything, and consistency in the care provided is fundamentally important to the manager. The manager's belief is unwavering in his belief that unfamiliar staff could cause a worry for the children. Given this view, the children always know, trust and have excellent relationships with those caring for them. The children can see that the team works together and this leads to consistent approaches to care.

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

The manager and staff have a preferred model of therapeutic care for the children. This model of care is integrated into every aspect of the functioning of the home. This means that staff have a clear understanding and framework to guide their practice. As a result, relationships are excellent, and children know they can turn to the staff if they have any worries. Staff listen and acknowledge children's worries or concerns. These are discussed, and support and help are provided to the children. Staff provide the children with the coping strategies they need, and this has made them more able to cope with their emotions or challenges in life.

The staff team does not shy away from difficult conversations with the children. Staff consistently implement strong behavioural boundaries. Because of the consistency in the staff team, the behavioural expectations of adults are never questioned by children, and positive behavioural expectations are the norm.

The manager and staff understand the potential risks to children from using the internet and social media platforms. Children are safer because they openly share, with the staff, what they are doing online. The children know that the staff just want them to be safe.

The children have been very settled. There have been no safeguarding incidents or children going missing from care. This is because of the excellent care, support and oversight that the children receive. Managers and staff manage children's behaviour and safeguarding in a proactive manner. They anticipate issues arising and so act quickly to prevent children becoming unsafe. The key-working sessions that staff undertake with children are of a very high quality and address any worries or issues that children may have. Managers and staff go above and beyond in identifying solutions to concerns that children may have. This provides children with reassurance that they are taken seriously.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and his team are great advocates for children and are relentless in securing the best possible services to help the children as they progress. The management team, when required, challenge other professionals if there are any delays in identifying support for children, for example advocating to education colleagues to increase the levels of tuition and locating a suitable education

provision. The manager does this, as he is acutely aware of the impact on a child's life if they do not receive essential support.

The manager and staff truly care about children. They understand some of the challenges with supporting children to move to the home or when they leave. To help children during these transitional stages in their lives, the manager and staff develop very detailed plans. When a child moves in, this is taken at a pace to suit the child. The manager and staff fully involve parents, carers, and key external professionals. This considered approach makes the transition easier for the child and allows them to settle quickly to life in their new home.

The manager leads by example, and this has led to the development of a positive culture and ethos where the child is central to everything. The manager is very committed and strives for the children to do well. The manager, deputy manager and team are very reflective and always consider any changes that can be made to enhance the care provided. The preferred model of care, together with regular consultations with a psychologist, lead to well-considered changes designed to enhance the children's experiences and help them progress.

The manager is very forward thinking. He identified that the staff team could have lost some essential skills because it has had no difficult incidents to deal with. The manager worked with the deputy manager and held a training day with the team to revisit some processes and develop the team's awareness to prevent staff becoming too complacent. This means that staff know how to respond, should an incident arise in the future. This proactive approach highlights how child centred the staff are and that they are continually striving to improve themselves for the benefit of the children.

The manager and deputy have worked tirelessly to embed a therapeutic model into all work in the home. They are now considering the next phase of development for the home to underpin their current approach. Children are at the heart of everything that happens in this home, and the staff are always proactive in finding ways to further support the children.

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: SC036262

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

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

Responsible individual: Patsy Burrows

Registered manager: Stuart Beresford

Inspector

Lizette Watts, Social Care Inspector

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