

SC036262

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to four children or young people who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The age range of young people is 11 to 18. The home is operated by an experienced, qualified manager who has been registered with Ofsted since February 2017.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 February 2019

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: 2 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive excellent care and protection from staff who are thoughtful and devoted. Consequently, young people make life-changing progress. One independent reviewing officer said, 'Staff provide genuine care and profound affection.' This comment illustrates the strength of the relationships between young people and staff. Young people have developed strong attachments to staff and they see the staff and managers as family members.

The managers and staff have ensured that the home has remained very stable, with no new young people moving to the home or any leaving since the last inspection. This stability has provided the basis from which young people have made very good progress in all areas of their lives.

The manager and staff understand the importance of education, training and employment for young people. Consequently, all the young people have made considerable progress in this area, and are now either in full-time education or undertaking an apprenticeship. One young person is making excellent progress with an apprenticeship and she is on course to secure full-time employment. The other young people attend full-time education; they maintain good attendance and are ambitious to do well. The manager and staff work hard to instil a strong work ethic, which is fundamental to the educational progress children make.

Staff undertake detailed and thoughtful work to help prepare young people for leaving care. Staff help young people to develop the skills needed to live independently. Staff make sure that young people have the right accommodation, located near the home, so that staff can be on hand to provide ongoing support. Staff help young people to prepare, furnish and decorate their new accommodation. They ensure that young people have the right services in place to provide the ongoing support they will require to make a safe and successful transition.

Young people have become emotionally resilient and insightful. Therefore, their emotional and mental health is considerably improved. Self-harming behaviours are now rare. Young people say they feel able to manage their emotions and feelings because they have better alternatives to harming themselves, such as confiding in staff.

The manager and staff understand the importance to young people of maintaining relationships with their families. Young people receive the help that they need to maintain these crucial relationships. Staff are aware of the emotional impact these relationships may have on young people so make themselves available to provide the emotional support young people need.

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

Staff manage the behaviour of young people exceptionally well. Staff do not have to resort to punitive methods of behaviour management, and so there have been no physical interventions. Sanctions are a rarity. The behaviour of young people is overwhelmingly good because young people say they do not want to disappoint the staff. This is testament to the strength of relationships that have been built.

Young people benefit from, and are safer because staff implement, consistent behavioural boundaries. Staff also work hard to ensure that young people develop health routines. They make sure young people are out of bed early in the morning, attend school or their apprenticeship training. Young people are also in their rooms and asleep at a reasonable time at night. Young people understand what is expected of them by staff. Because of this, there have been no significant incidents and young people are happy, content and safe.

The staff team has a detailed understanding of each young person's risks and vulnerabilities. This understanding is a result of managers and staff completing detailed safe care plans that set out the actions staff should take to keep young people safe. Safe care plans are further strengthened because staff hold monthly reflective discussions with a psychologist to review issues impacting on young people's safety.

Young people are safer because the manager adheres to safe recruitment procedures. The manager ensures that potential new staff undergo a range of checks, including disclosure checks. Additionally, past employment references are verified, and any prospective employee must account for gaps in their employment. These checks help to minimise the risk to young people from those in positions of trust.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and deputy manager are both qualified, having attained the Level 5 diploma in leadership and management. The manager and deputy are both committed to ensuring the highest quality of care. Managers are highly ambitious for young people and want to help young people achieve their full potential.

The manager is very well supported by a stable and committed staff team that places the welfare of young people first. There have been no changes to the staff team since the last inspection. Staff report feeling very happy and settled in their roles. They are appropriately qualified and undertake a broad range of training.

Staff receive regular professional supervision that focuses on the needs of each young person, together with their own development and training needs. Staff receive excellent managerial oversight, guidance and support. As a result, they feel valued, listened to and respected.

Since the last inspection, the manager has implemented findings from research and theory into care practice. He has developed a range of evidence-based approaches and tools to keep staff informed and improve their overall knowledge base. This research has improved staff practice.

Managers have developed very good relationships with partner agencies. These relationships mean that young people have the support services in place to meet their needs quickly. Should other agencies not provide the right services, the manager will escalate his concerns immediately to resolve the matter.

The manager is adept at using a range of systems to monitor the quality of care. In addition to monthly visits and a report from the independent visitor, the manager monitors and evaluates all aspects of care practice. For example, he monitors the quality and frequency of individual work completed with young people and the number of

positive rewards staff give to young people. He also analyses all feedback provided by other agencies and harnesses this information to help him drive the service forward.

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: Richard Jackson

Inspector

Phillip Morris, social care inspector

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