

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 three children who experience emotional and social difficulties.

Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2019.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 January 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
---	--------------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
---	-------------

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: 19 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/12/2023	Full	Outstanding
16/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
25/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
09/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children experience stability and a sense of belonging as they live in the home for a long time. They receive care from exceptionally nurturing staff who know them very well. Children say they like living in the home and that it is 'absolutely lovely'.

Staff and managers forge strong working relationships with children's families. This supports children to spend quality time with their loved ones. Family members value and trust the care afforded to the children. One family member said, 'He calls it home. They do everything with him, and he is living life to the full.' Staff recognise the importance of children's friendships. This means that children enjoy having friends visit and stay over at the home.

Children make exceptional and sustained progress because of the care afforded to them. A therapeutic parenting approach is embedded across all areas of care. Staff are consistent and have worked in the home for a long time. This has enabled staff to develop trusted relationships with children. Skilled staff engage children in regular chats about sensitive topics, such as their family. Staff listen to children while providing them with advice and guidance.

All children attend education on a full-time basis. Staff promote educational achievement. This resulted in one child achieving well in their GCSE exams. Children have future ambitions and say that staff promote their goals and support them. Managers strive to understand barriers that children face. They promote weekly meetings with education providers to ensure that children are supported. This is helping children to reach their academic potential.

Staff strongly promote and encourage children to access activities in line with their interests. All children's individual interests are understood and embraced by staff. This has enabled one child to play in a local football team. Furthermore, this supports children to broaden their network of friends and support.

There is a focus on supporting children to develop their independence where possible. Staff ensure that this is on a gradual basis and in line with the child's needs. One child said, 'They sort things for the future, like helping me get my moped license whilst here.' This ensures that children are prepared for adulthood as they mature throughout their time in the home.

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

Staff and managers understand the children's vulnerabilities exceptionally well. Each child has a care and safety plan that details their individual needs and any worries.

The plans give staff guidance on how to care for and safeguard children effectively. Plans contain some historic information, but when risk reduced for one child, the recording in the document did not sufficiently reflect this. However, in discussion with staff and managers, the level of risk was well understood and the actual care and support provided reflected this.

Significant incidents, such as the use of physical intervention or children being missing from home, do not occur. This is because of the established relationships and support afforded to children. However, staff can explain the procedures that they would follow should significant risks become present. All children have an up-to-date missing profile and Philomena protocol.

When incidents between children occur, staff engage them in discussions about their behaviour. There is a balance between understanding why incidents have occurred and ensuring that children understand potential consequences. This supports children to learn from incidents and helps them manage relationships with peers more effectively.

Staff engage children in discussions about potential risks. This is on a planned and unplanned basis, for example regarding the risk of vaping. Children feel comfortable discussing sensitive health needs, such as their mental health. This enables open and honest discussions. Children feel exceptionally well supported.

The managers have advocated to ensure that specialist assessments for children take place. At times, managers have gained approval for assessments to be privately funded to reduce delays in children receiving the right support, for example a dyslexia assessment for one child. This has ensured that they receive the appropriate support in education.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is run by a consistent management team that creates a highly positive culture. Together, the manager and deputy manager are ambitious for children, and they value their staff team. They strive to ensure that there is a focus on children continuing to achieve and that they are provided with opportunities that enhance their life. One member of staff said of the managers:

'I love them. They are so supportive to kids and staff in every way. If you have a problem, they will do their best to support you. They are fantastic. They have such fabulous relationships with the boys. The boys gravitate towards them due to the relationships they have built with them over time. They are firm but fair. When they say no, they explain why.'

The managers lead by example. They are visible to the children and actively spend time with them. When sporadic sickness has occurred, the managers have cared for the children to prevent the use of agency workers. This prevents children from being cared for by unfamiliar adults.

The managers strongly advocate on behalf of children and escalate concerns when they arise. When plans have not been received, for example a child's pathway plan, the manager has addressed this with the relevant professional. This ensures that the staff have the most up-to-date information to enable them to provide a high quality of care.

There is a focus on reflective practice. When a contract with a service delivering reflective practice ended, the managers developed their own package. Managers recognised the benefit to staff and the positive impact on the quality of care afforded to children. Team meetings include reflective practice and focus on the presenting needs of the children. However, supervision sessions with staff do not always capture reflective discussions or more in-depth discussions about the children. Although, in discussion with staff, they feel supervision is reflective.

There is strong partner agency working. The managers understand the benefit of working together in the best interests of children. The manager ensures that regular meetings with professionals take place when needed. Professionals unanimously speak highly of the staff and managers and how they have supported children to progress. One professional summed up the views of others by saying:

'The management team are excellent, and [name of child] has built up good relationships with the staff team in general. He has been offered stability, security, nurturing and enabling care, and in my view, the provision, team and their care of [name of child] is outstanding.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff receive supervision that enables reflective practice and discussion about the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. 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 14.2)

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: Luke Impey

Registered manager: Stuart Beresford

Inspectors

Jess Elliott, Social Care Inspector
Deirdre Silkstone, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2025