

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. It provides care for up to four children who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.

The manager is experienced and has been registered since 2019.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 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: 9 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive excellent care and support. The progress they make is outstanding. It reflects the commitment of the staff who look after them. From their starting points, children have excelled in all areas of their lives.

A strong and commendable focus is placed on the value of education and learning. Children now attend education provisions daily. They have attained beyond expectation and have bright futures to look forward to. An assistant headteacher for one of the children's schools stated: 'I class this child as one of my biggest successes in my time in education; with huge support from the home I feel we have completely changed the life chances of a really lovely young man.'

Children receive excellent healthcare support. This is particularly evident in relation to the need for therapeutic help. Children have received bespoke therapy to support them to make sense of their past experiences. Staff also have regular consultations and reflective practice sessions with a clinical psychologist. The psychologist said: 'I have nothing but positive things to say about the staff team and care they provide. Therapeutic models are fully embedded in this home and staff understand those models and apply them extremely well.'

Children get to keep in touch with people who matter to them. The staff team places great importance on engaging and encouraging family and friends to be involved. This includes welcoming friends to visit the home and allowing children to spend time with friends and family at their homes. The members of the staff team are not risk-averse and understand the need to support children to try new things and enjoy positive experiences.

Children have a strong voice in how the home is run. They feel confident in speaking with managers and staff about any concerns they may have. Staff let children know about new children moving into the home before their arrival. They contribute to the development and maintenance of the home. One child has helped build fences in the garden and takes great pride in this achievement.

Preparation for children's transitions to the next stage of their life is excellent. Workbooks on independence skills are completed with children where relevant. This prepares them for their move to adult life. Staff support them to learn the necessary skills for living alone, or in supported accommodation. Staff act as strong advocates for children. They ensure that all involved agencies work together, to make timely and appropriate plans for transitions out of the home.

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

Children feel extremely safe living in this home. They view the staff team as their family and know that staff have their best interests at heart. There have been no incidents of children going missing from care. Children feel secure and able to share their feelings with staff. Managers are not complacent about their excellent record for children not going missing. They continue to ensure that risk assessments and plans set out what action staff should take in the event of a child going missing.

There have been no incidents of physical intervention. This reflects the competence of the staff in de-escalating risky or dangerous situations. One child stated that when he moved in, he was prone to outbursts. He said that the staff understand his triggers and can calm him. He could articulate the journey he has been on over six years living in this home and his increased sense of safety. Staff continue to receive refresher training and take part in scenarios in team meetings. This ensures that they remain competent and skilled in keeping children safe.

Children learn to manage their behaviour and understand their risks. Staff teach them how to manage their emotions, using therapeutic models and practice. This has led to children having clear risk management plans. Children read and understand these plans. For example, one child now spends time unsupervised in the local community.

A key strength of this home is how well staff and managers engage with other agencies. For example, education providers have visited the home and taken part in risk management meetings and planning. Staff support parents to be involved and understand children's risks. Parents are supported to manage these risks. Staff enable children to develop their own safety strategies. This leads to an excellent approach to managing risks and keeping the children safe.

Staff recruitment checks are extremely robust and prevent unsuitable adults from working in this home. The manager ensures that all documentation is thoroughly checked for all applicants. Any gaps in employment histories are clarified and recorded well. This means that children receive care from staff who have the necessary skills and competence to ensure their continued safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is inspirational and empowering to his staff and the children. He is supported by an equally competent and committed deputy manager. They both set very high expectations for the children in their care. They support their staff to an extremely high level. This has led to a stable and highly motivated team.

Staff love their jobs and understand that their role is vitally important. They speak with real passion and knowledge about the children. They feel extremely valued by managers. They receive regular high-quality supervision. This considers not only

their professional development, but their own emotional well-being. This reflects how well the therapeutic model is embedded in this home and flows through every aspect of the day-to-day running of the home.

Another key strength of this home relates to the matching processes for new admissions. Managers understand the value of well-planned and considered placement matching. They consult with children to elicit their wishes, views and feelings on a new child moving in. They consult with relevant professionals to seek their views on potential new placements. Such practice has led to outstanding placement security and progress for children. It is practice worthy of wider dissemination.

Management oversight and the monitoring of care are outstanding. Managers review and audit files. They look for any patterns or trends in children's behaviours which may indicate a concern. They act quickly and ensure that multi-agency meetings take place to adapt or change plans. They consistently seek to improve their practice and ensure that children continue to make progress.

There is a commendable learning culture in this home. Managers strive to learn from their robust management monitoring systems. They involve staff, children, involved agencies and relevant family members. Children's views are integral to this home and how it is run. Managers use their independent visitor reports and Ofsted inspection reports to continually make changes. This has led to continual improvements in the quality of care and therapeutic support offered to children.

Managers took the decision to convert the staff office space into study rooms for children. Children have full and open access to the study rooms. This reflects the commitment of managers and staff to providing a truly homely environment for children. Children learn to trust and respect their own and others' property. The open-door approach to all areas of the home reduces any potential for an institutionalised feel.

Children and staff have received excellent support during the COVID-19 pandemic. During periods of national restrictions, managers ensured strict adherence to the government guidance. Children received the reassurance and support they needed from the manager to understand the pandemic and how to keep themselves and others safe.

The two recommendations set at the last inspection have been fully met. No shortfalls were identified as a result of this inspection.

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 address: Derbyshire County Council

Registered provider address: County Offices, Matlock DE4 3AG

Responsible individual: Patsy Burrows

Registered manager: Stuart Beresford

Inspector

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector

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