

SC037256

Registered provider: Suffolk County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local-authority home provides care for up to seven children. The children may have experienced neglect and emotional abuse or had traumatic experiences that have left them vulnerable.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 April 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/10/2021	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/02/2020	Full	Inadequate
28/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. Children are making progress from their starting points. Families and professionals are pleased with the care that staff are providing to their children. Staff are experienced and confident, caring and nurturing. Children's experience of care is improved by living at this home.

One child has moved in since the last inspection. The manager completed a thorough matching assessment before the child moved in. Due to events leading up to the move, the child moved into the home sooner than planned. The social worker confirmed that the managers were present from the very beginning to help the child with their understanding of what was happening. Information about the home was presented to the child in a format that they understood. The manager's nurturing approach helped to reassure the child. Consequently, the child experienced a smooth introduction to the home.

Two children have left the home since the last inspection. The manager ensured that both children continued to receive care and support from staff until they were settled in their new homes.

Staff establish positive, trusting relationships with children. Consequently, children engage in discussions with staff about the issues that are important to them. Staff have helped children with their understanding of substance misuse, unsafe situations and dangerous behaviour. From these discussions, the children gain an awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

Children are not attending school. However, there is improvement in their educational engagement. Partnership working between the staff and virtual schools has ensured that the children are provided with bespoke education packages. Children attend care farms and forest school settings. Tutors and external providers come to the home and encourage the children to get involved in art projects and practical life skills. A weekly visit from a construction van has introduced the children to bricklaying, tiling and carpentry.

There have been considerable improvements to the interior of the home since the last inspection. Damage to interior walls and doors has been repaired. Interior walls have been redecorated. Children's bedrooms are clean and comfortable and reflect each child's interests. However, the children's bathrooms need attention and redecoration. These issues detract from what is otherwise a nurturing and well-maintained home.

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

There have been incidents of children going missing from the home. However, these have reduced in number considerably since the last inspection. Staff have responded in line with individual missing-from-care protocols to help find and return the child to

the home as soon as possible on each occasion. The police missing person's adviser confirmed that staff have implemented best practice and a coordinated approach with the police when children have gone missing. This approach has influenced the reduction in the number of episodes of going missing from care for all the children.

Staff access safeguarding training that helps them to identify concerns of exploitation, gang affiliation and substance misuse. Targeted training and planned sessions with a clinical psychologist provide a forum for specific case consultation. These sessions develop staff's awareness and enable staff to meet children's individual needs.

Risk-management plans are updated following incidents. However, plans lack detail and fail to provide the staff with clear guidance or risk-reduction strategies. Therefore, staff may not be confident and consistent in their responses to the children.

The home's fire risk assessment has not been reviewed despite two separate concerning incidents with children attempting to light fires in the home. This lack of review does not ensure that all risk mitigation is documented and shared.

There are alarms on all the children's bedroom doors to monitor their movements at night. Although this may be appropriate for some children, it is unclear why alarms are in use for other children. The unnecessary use of alarms does not encourage independence or safety awareness and is a restriction on children who do not require them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a dedicated management team. Managers have established excellent relationships with families and other agencies to help them to meet children's needs. The feedback from the children's families and from professionals is unanimously positive.

Social workers and other professionals involved with the children receive regular updates about their children's progress. Reports for meetings are comprehensive and weekly reports are detailed. Children benefit from the manager's approach to cohesive, multi-agency working.

Staff said that they feel well supported by their managers. They receive regular supervisions and performance reviews. The managers' presence is highly visible. Children enjoy spending time with them and feel able to approach them for help. Managers make themselves available to staff for support and advice. As managers work on shift, they act as positive role models for the staff and establish trusted relationships with the children.

The manager has established a stable and committed staff team. Staff enjoy working at the home. Managers recognise the importance of familiar faces for the children. Staff cover additional shifts and support each other to make sure that there

is always the required number of staff available. Children benefit from consistent and familiar staff at the home each day.

New staff receive a thorough induction that includes a range of training, and they shadow shifts with experienced staff. Good induction, support and training help staff to meet children's needs and provide continuity of care.

The manager has met four of the six requirements from the last inspection. The quality-of-care reviews have improved. Risk assessments have been completed when contractors are in the home. The manager has ensured that all complaints have been responded to appropriately, and that there is a thorough oversight of all restraints.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, improve the detail and quality of risk assessments. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	27 May 2022
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iv)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	27 May 2022
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—	27 May 2022

the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)) In particular, ensure that bedroom-door alarms are only used for the purpose of safeguarding.	
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b)) In particular, ensure that the home's fire risk assessment is reviewed following incidents or changes in risks.	27 May 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should provide a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. In particular, ensure that children's bathrooms are maintained to a good standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC037256

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Suffolk County Council

Registered provider address: Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX

Responsible individual: Robina Khan

Registered manager: Louisa Nimmo

Inspector

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector

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