

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 with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2023

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: 11 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/04/2022	Full	Good
13/10/2021	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/02/2020	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently five children living at the home. Three children have moved out since the last inspection. The staff have kept in contact with these children as they settle into their new homes. Ongoing support has helped the children to become more confident with their future plans.

Staff support children to maintain relationships that are important to them. Children are encouraged to meet with family, friends and build relationships outside the home. Staff understand the importance of staying in touch with children when they are in the community. Children know that staff are concerned for their safety and well-being when they are out, and that they can call staff for help.

The staff value the importance of children's education. However, not all children engage with learning. The managers are strong advocates for the children. They ensure that they receive the most suitable educational options. Some of the children engage in alternative provisions on a part-time basis, with staff supporting their learning with informal educational resources. School attendance and engagement has improved for two children since they came to the home. Children know that staff care about their learning.

Children are encouraged and supported by staff to attend health appointments. Staff identify children's emerging health needs and make specialist appointments as necessary. Staff have advocated for one child who has a fear of dentists. Joint working between staff and the health professional helped the child to understand the consequence of ignoring the problems. As a result, the child has attended one appointment to start treatment.

Children's views are collected in a variety of ways. Children know that they can speak to staff about issues that bother them. Staff are trained to use a trauma-informed approach. This helps them to consider the perspective of the child.

An advocate comes to the home monthly. All the children know they can speak to the advocate. Recently, the advocate helped support a child to represent their views at a child in care meeting. This helped to reduce the child's anxiety of not being understood.

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

Staff have good working relationships with other agencies such as social workers, the youth justice service and the police. The effectiveness of these relationships helps the children to become safer.

The staff understand the risks for the children and actively help to manage them. Creative and well-planned discussions take place between the staff and children that

cover important and emerging topics. These discussions include the impact of substance misuse, safe internet use and fire safety. This enhances the children's knowledge of personal safety.

The staff challenge children when they use inappropriate language or show discriminatory behaviour. The staff respond to incidents of bullying. Staff have reflective discussions with children to encourage positive relationships. Group work sessions and individual conversations help children to understand how to treat others with respect.

Serious incidents occur both at the home and in the community. Staff respond and take action to reduce the risk of further harm. On occasions, staff have called the police for support during highly volatile situations. Police involvement has been appropriate to keep the children and others safe.

The staff's consistent and nurturing approach has enabled the children to become safer. Children have all made progress from their individual starting points. Records show a considerable reduction in incidents of self-harm and children going missing from the home. Restraints are used at times to keep children and others safe. These are well recorded with managers' oversight to ensure they are proportionate and necessary.

Risk assessments are clear and contain risk-reduction strategies. Staff record incidents well. However, staff have not consistently updated the risk assessments for individual children following incidents when risks to children have changed. This does not ensure that staff are provided with the necessary risk-reduction strategies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The managers lead a culture of respect for children and staff. They implement the home's approach, in a nurturing parenting style. They know the children well and have developed positive relationships with professionals and family members.

Staff are experienced and knowledgeable. The staff's understanding of identified risks for the children is enhanced by the manager's knowledge. Regular team meetings are well attended. The managers and consultant psychotherapist facilitate meetings that include child-focused and insightful discussions. These guide the staff to implement therapeutic support and provide good outcomes for the children.

New staff receive thorough inductions. All staff receive regular, reflective supervision sessions. The staff are positive about the managers and the support that they receive. The managers ensure that staff are provided with a range of training. This helps to increase the staff's knowledge and skills.

The management team recognises the need for a period of stability. This has led to a decision not to accept any new children until the children currently living at the home are more settled.

The manager has not completed the level 5 diploma within three years of her appointment. Furthermore, some staff have not achieved a relevant level 3 diploma within two years of commencing a care role. Therefore, not all staff are suitably qualified for their roles.

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, The 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, update children's risk assessments following any changes.	2 November 2023
A person may only manage a children's home if— having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children— the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children. For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has— by the relevant date, attained— the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 5 Diploma"). The relevant date is—	7 December 2023

in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home. (Regulation 28 (1)(b)(i) (2)(c)(i) (3)(a))	
The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	7 December 2023

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, Suffolk
IP1 2BX

Responsible individual: Glynn Smith

Registered manager: Louisa Nimmo

Inspectors

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector
Trudy Potter, Social Care Inspector

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