

SC039038

Registered provider: Leicester City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to seven children with learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, there were six children living at the home.

The home is led by a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2025

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: 19 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
30/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
28/07/2021	Full	Good
15/10/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children enjoy living at this home. There are excellent relationships between the children and staff. Children like spending time with the staff and have fun. Family members praise the level of care given to their child. One parent said, 'It's amazing, I wouldn't want him to be anywhere else'.

Children make exceptional progress. This is in many aspects of their lives. This includes their education and personal routines. Also, how they communicate and interact with other children and adults.

Each child has an individual placement plan. They are extremely clear, detailed and reviewed regularly. They tell the story of the child. What is working well is recorded alongside what could still be improved. This gives staff specific guidance on how to provide exceptional care to children.

Staff hold excellent one-to-one meetings with children. They are individual to the needs and goals of the child. Children's wishes and feelings are gained. They include talking with children about their life, family, culture and religion. In addition, monthly children's group meetings are held. These are creatively planned and led. Important topics are discussed such as fire safety. Also, respecting others and the introduction of music therapy.

Children are helped to remain healthy. This includes working with physical and mental health professionals. Staff support children to have a balanced diet. They also promote exercise in meetings and practically through activities.

Learning and education is central to the children's lives. Staff work very closely with schools to ensure consistent ways of working. When a child is out of school they are supported to continue learning. Children are helped to quickly regain a school placement.

Staff know the children extremely well. They understand the way each child communicates. This includes use of pictures and symbols for non-speaking children. This helps children to make choices and express feelings. Children are at the centre of everything at this home.

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

Staff understand risks to children. This includes the additional vulnerabilities of children with learning disabilities. Children have individual assessments of risks. They clearly explain the concerns and what to do to minimise the risk. Excellent progress of children has meant some previous concerns are no longer a risk.

Children's unwanted behaviours are managed exceptionally well by staff. They know how to respond in a calm way to challenging situations. Physical intervention is rarely required. It is only used as a last resort to keep a child or others safe. An assistant manager is a trainer of de-escalation and physical intervention techniques. This helps staff to remain skilled in this area.

Each child has a positive handling plan. It guides staff to the best ways of helping and protecting the child. Plans are reviewed and updated following any incidents. The manager reviews and adds comments to all incident records. Therefore, staff continue to learn new ways of caring for children with additional needs.

The manager ensures that robust safe recruitment practice is used for all staff joining the home.

Children do not go missing from this home. Staff always work one-to-one with children. However, there are clear procedures and protocols in place for if this should happen.

Children have regular visits from children's rights officers. They also have access to independent advocates if required. Staff speak of the importance of themselves being a constant advocate for the children.

Children are helped to understand the danger of fire. Pictures and stories explain safe evacuation from the home. This is particularly important for children with little or no concept of danger.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and assistant managers are exceptionally enthusiastic about their roles. They are aspirational for both children and staff. They speak warmly and positively about each child.

Staff feel very well supported by the manager, assistant managers and responsible individual. Staff feel able to speak to managers at any time. They feel listened to. One member of staff said, 'I have found [managers] to be very considerate, supportive and compassionate. An open-door policy ensures that staff feel valued and confident enough to discuss any issues that may arise'.

The manager knows the staff extremely well. She is aware of their strengths and areas to develop further. This has helped staff progress to senior roles within this or other homes.

The manager ensures that staff receive a thorough induction programme. This includes completion of an induction booklet. This is followed by an ongoing comprehensive training programme. The manager has ensured that all staff have, or are working towards, their diploma qualification.

Supervision discussions and team meetings are effective for staff wellbeing and development. The manager plans these across the year. They include individual, reflective and casework supervisions. Also, individual care teams, group sessions and development days.

On one occasion the manager did not make a formal notification of an incident to the regulator. However, she and the responsible individual have reflected on this. They are fully aware of incidents that require a notification, and the process involved.

Robust quality assurance processes are used by the manager and assistant managers. A range of monitoring tools are used. This includes a fortnightly comprehensive audit of the life of each child. This helps to track changes, progress and achievements. The manager has excellent oversight of the home. Her comments and actions are recorded on all reports, plans and other documents. The manager and assistant managers spend time with children and observing staff practice.

The manager is very well supported by an experienced and knowledgeable responsible individual. This includes regular supervision. The responsible individual knows the children well and speaks very highly of them. The manager also has a support network with other home managers. This includes weekly group supervision with the responsible individual.

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

Recommendations

- It is for the registered person to judge whether the incident is sufficiently serious to make formal notifications and, if it is, which other relevant persons may be notified. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 63, paragraph 14.12)

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: SC039038

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street
Leicester LE1 1FZ

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: April Croft

Inspector

Shaun Caplis, Social Care Inspector

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