

SC039038

Registered provider: Leicester City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority, and provides care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people who have a range of learning disabilities.

The registered manager has been registered since 2018.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 October 2019

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	good
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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: 11 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2019	Full	Good
12/03/2018	Full	Good
13/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
15/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive outstanding, highly personalised care and support. They make significant progress in all areas of their lives. They enjoy experiences which enhance their lives and improve their sense of being valued.

A key strength relates to how well the staff team works with parents and family members. One young person had not seen their parent for over 10 years. This was explored by staff, who then, in full consultation with the young person's social worker, worked sensitively to reintroduce contact. Staff recognised the importance of this relationship and the young person's need for this secure lifelong attachment. Parents spoke positively about the support they receive from staff. Parents feel fully involved in all aspects of the care provided and decision-making.

Most young people are non-verbal. Staff use social stories and other communication methods to elicit their wishes, views and feelings. This includes the use of augmentative and alternative communication aids. Staff use research-informed practice in their communication with young people. This is working exceptionally well and is worthy of wider dissemination. Young people clearly feel able to express their views and feelings with confidence in this home.

Another key strength relates to education. The staff team works closely and proactively with education providers. Strong collaboration with partner agencies ensures that young people's needs are known and understood. One school has provided training for staff from the home on behaviour management and autism spectrum disorder. A great emphasis is placed on sharing information and providing consistent care between the home and the education provision. This reflects a highly organised, child-centred, team-around-the-child approach.

Young people have their complex health needs well met. Staff have acted as excellent corporate parents to further explore the potential additional health needs of the young people. They seek specialist medical advice and assessments where necessary. They have secured diagnoses and support for young people which were not previously identified in other settings.

Young people have access to a range of social, educational and recreational activities. Careful planning and consideration of young people's complex needs, as well as being ambitious for young people, have enabled them to have experiences such as travelling abroad. One parent stated: 'I never in my life thought my child would go on a plane or holiday abroad. It is amazing that this happened, and he had the best time ever.'

Young people develop independence skills. This includes having regular sessions with the home's chef to learn how to make meals. Staff strive to ensure that young people gain confidence and increase their independence skills.

Preparation for young people to move on from this home is exceptional. The staff team works closely with the local authority's transitions team. Staff also fully include parents in considering the next steps. They invite adult service providers to visit the home and shadow staff. They advocate on behalf of young people to ensure that the most suitable service is identified. Staff provide outreach support once a young person has moved on. They are currently considering the potential for two of the young people to move to the same adult accommodation. This reflects the commitment of staff and managers to making transitions as smooth and positive as they can be. This collaborative work between staff, the local authority transitions team and providers is an example of outstanding child-centred practice. It enhances young people's life chances.

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

Staff understand and respond extremely well to the actual and potential risks posed to, and by, young people. Young people are very well supervised and supported, both inside and outside of the home. Staff are not averse to enabling young people to take age-appropriate risks. This is evident from the regular holidays abroad and trips out with young people. Managers continue to enhance the lives of the young people in their care.

There have been no incidents of young people going missing from care. This is due to the high staffing ratios, excellent risk assessments and security within the home. Staff plan well for trips out. They understand the potential triggers for young people and respond proactively.

Staff fully understand the behavioural and emotional needs of young people. They set clear and consistent boundaries for them. Young people feel increasingly safe and secure. One young person had experienced a very traumatic past before moving to this home. Their presentation now is testament to how secure they feel. Although non-verbal, the young person presents as extremely happy, smiling and relaxed with staff and other young people. Involved agencies, professionals and family members also commented on the transformation and increased sense of safety experienced by young people over time.

Research-informed practice is deeply embedded in staff practice. The staff make good use of social work models and tools.. This includes finding out from young people

whether they have any particular worries. Staff then work with all young people to consider those worries and how they may be reduced or eradicated. Given that most of the young people are non-verbal, this requires exceptional skill and dedication from staff.

Staff recruitment procedures and practices are robust and prevent unsuitable adults from working with young people in this home. The registered manager has improved the recording of verifications of references. The recommendation set at the last inspection has been met.

Staff use body maps to record any marks or injuries to young people that have been noted. These are linked to incident reports and daily records for young people. Not all body maps include full information or signing off by staff. This minor shortfall has had no direct or adverse impact on the safety or well-being of young people, but a recommendation has been set to address it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is inspirational, committed and well-respected. He is supported by two equally inspirational and committed assistant managers. The manager leads by example. He knows and understands the young people extremely well. He acts as a hugely positive role model and advocate for young people and staff. He sets very high expectations for young people, supported by an exceptionally committed and competent team of staff.

Managers fully understand the progress being made by young people. They challenge any actual or perceived shortfalls of other agencies in meeting the needs of young people. They have worked closely with the transitions team and health professionals this year, to ensure that young people's complex needs are met.

Managers have exceptionally clear and detailed development plans, location risk assessments and strategies in place. They have a clear and commendable vision for the quality of care they wish to provide. All managers lead by example. They know their young people and their staff extremely well. A consistent term used by parents and professionals to describe the atmosphere of this home was 'family'. Managers have nurtured a sense of belonging and value for young people, staff and family members. The commitment, transparency and positivity of staff and managers are clear from the time of entering this home.

Management monitoring and oversight are excellent. They have improved greatly since the last inspection, due in part to the recruitment of a second assistant manager. Daily management monitoring of case records and plans takes place. The quality and content of this monitoring are excellent. The requirement set at the last inspection in respect of monitoring and review systems has been met.

Staff present as extremely happy and confident in their roles. They reported receiving excellent training, support and formal supervision. They feel empowered and encouraged

to take on lead roles and make suggestions. Records confirm that staff now receive regular supervision from managers. The requirement set at the last inspection has been met.

Case records for young people present as being extremely clear, detailed and up to date. Managers provide robust oversight of all case records. These records would provide young people and family members with an excellent sense of what the young people's time living in this home was like. Staff ensure that recommendations from looked after reviews are added to plans now. The requirement regarding case records, which was set at the last inspection, has been met.

Managers have ensured that the admissions and discharge register has been updated since the last inspection. The register contains all legally required information. The requirement set at the last inspection has been met.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: City Hall, 3rd Floor, Rutland Wing, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: Christopher Haines

Inspector

Tracy Murty: social care inspector

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