

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 operated by a local authority and provides care for up to seven children who have learning disabilities.

Six children lived at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2020 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 March 2024

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: 30 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
28/07/2021	Full	Good
15/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/02/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children in this home are well cared for and make excellent progress. The service is child-focussed and makes a positive difference to children's lives. Children receive good support to help them to be successful throughout their childhood, and as they prepare for adulthood. This support is provided by a committed staff team.

Staff build positive and purposeful relationships with children. They demonstrate excellent practice, having a significant knowledge and understanding of disabled children's needs. Staff ensure that children are safe and that all their needs are met. Staff consistently act to ensure the best outcomes for the children in their care.

Children benefit from comprehensive care planning. Assessments consider everything that is important for the child. Children's voices are heard and recorded in their plans. A range of multi-agency professionals contribute to such planning which results in children's life experiences significantly improving. Children typically live here for years, developing a real sense of belonging and self-worth. Staff remain in contact with children and families, providing continuity of relationships, for as long as necessary.

Complex, long term health conditions are stabilised and well managed. Good diet, regular exercise, and prompt access to a range of specialist health care creates strong health outcomes. The home is very good at supporting children to develop improved self-care skills and grow their independence. For example, children become more able to eat independently, carry out personal hygiene tasks and manage their money.

Staff always place children at the heart of their practice. Much respect is given to family members who remain important people in the children's lives. Many examples were shared with the inspector of carefully nurtured relationships between children, families, and staff. Several family members spoke to the inspector expressing their gratitude and admiration for the team. One relative said, 'this home is the best, they have done things for us that we thought were impossible, nothing is too much trouble for them'.

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

Professional practice overtime results in sustained improvement to the lives of children. Highly effective planning manages and minimises risks inside and outside of the home. For children who have suffered significant harm and childhood trauma, arriving at the home is quite literally life changing.

Disabled children are kept safe, but not to the detriment of their independence. When children are new to the home, any risks are well understood and are significantly reducing.

Proactive and creative safeguarding practice means that all children, including the most vulnerable, have a strong sense of safety and well-being. They are unlikely to be missing from the home because of constant adult care and supervision. Children are involved in creating ways to de-escalate situations and finding creative alternative strategies that are effective.

Research-informed practice continues to develop from a strong and confident leadership team. The professional use of resources specifically designed for disabled children make an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of children. Important topics such as staying safe online, exploring gender and puberty, and growing up in care are sensitively explored with children. The inspector was shown a variety of story books, online resources, and high-quality life story work which enhances children's understanding of their journey through care.

Measures of restraint that feature physical intervention are low in number. Staff are skilled in a wide range of de-escalation techniques which are effective. Several strategies are used to manage challenging behaviour which means physical intervention is only ever a last resort. All behaviour management strategies have excellent records and robust manager's oversight. As children become more able to communicate their feelings and self-regulate, a distinct reduction in significant incidents occurs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is a confident leader. Her management style is enhanced by years of experience working with children with learning disabilities. She is a strong and powerful advocate for the children in her care and makes every decision with the child at the centre. Her ambition and high expectations have been influential in the children's sustained progress over many years.

Two qualified and experienced deputy managers enhance the leadership team. Individually they bring a wealth of knowledge to the service and have years of experience working with disabled children. They are excellent male role models to children who live here.

Managers know their strengths. They promote continuous professional development throughout the entire team. Opportunities for promotion and development within the local authority mean staff feel valued at work. Supervision discussions and team meetings are used effectively as opportunities to upskill staff both individually and collectively.

Staff talk positively about how much they enjoy working for this service. They speak of high-quality support they receive from managers. Staff who are new to the service or undertaking new roles receive effective induction and increased

supervision. Supervision is regular for all members of staff and is both supportive and challenging, to develop both the staff team and the service. Staff have access to good levels of training specific to their role with disabled children.

Stakeholders hold this service in high regard. It is referred to amongst professional networks as an example of good practice. The team are considered expert in their field. Professionals look forward to working with the service and value the knowledge and expertise of the staff team.

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: City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: April Croft

Inspector

Rachael Sprigg, social care inspector

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