

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.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 July 2021

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	requires improvement to be 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: 15 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/02/2019	Full	Good
12/03/2018	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good care and support from a dedicated staff team. One parent commented, 'We think the world of the place because of the way they look after our child,' while another parent said, 'The house is fantastic, very welcoming and the staff are great, each one of them, always putting the children and parents first.' These comments were typical of the views of many parents.

Children enjoy a wide range of social activities. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic and through lockdowns, staff have worked hard to ensure children have fun. Following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, staff are now taking children on holiday. This increases children's sense of belonging and enables them to experience new things.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff advocate strongly for children, ensuring their complex health needs are identified and services put in place to help them. One child has made significant progress and is now able to eat solid foods and prepare their own snacks. Staff work closely with health colleagues, who visit the home to support them. These include the child and adolescent mental health service together with specialist nursing services.

Children attend education and enjoy going to school. Staff have formed very close working relationships with schools. Children have been well supported to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption caused to their education on some occasions. Social stories and other communication methods have been used to explain the pandemic and how it has had an impact on children's freedom at times.

Children feel fully involved in the care and support they receive. They recently met with staff to discuss their wish to have a pet in the home. Staff worked with them to consider the most suitable pet, and two rabbits have joined the home. Children have a full say in how their rooms and other areas of the home are decorated. They clearly feel valued and part of a larger family.

A real strength of the management and staff is how well children are prepared for moving to the home or for moving on into adult accommodation. Staff visit children who are moving to the home and complete social stories with them. Children and their families visit the home to familiarise themselves in advance of children moving in. When the time comes for children to move to adult provisions, staff visit the new accommodation with them. They also ensure that they assist the transition, to minimise the potential disruption to children. Staff from adult services have been welcomed in the home. This has enabled these staff to see how children are cared for and supported. These practices have led to very positive and smooth transitions for children.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Two children were recently involved in a serious safeguarding incident. Staff on shift failed to contact the responsible managers, for several hours, to report the incident. They further failed to alert other staff on duty so that additional support could be made available, if required. Managers have considered this incident and have implemented tighter measures to prevent a reoccurrence. There has been no serious impact to children because of this incident.

Staff understand how children in crisis present. They respond to these incidents in accordance with procedures. The use of physical intervention by staff is minimal. This reflects positively on the ability of staff to de-escalate difficult and challenging situations with children. Children respond well to the behaviour management approaches used by staff. These approaches help to calm children when they become angry or frustrated.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made in relation to the use of and recording of body maps. Managers have reviewed this practice and made improvements. There is now clear management oversight of the use of body maps together with better recording. This recommendation is met.

There have been no recorded incidents of children going missing from the home. Children's risk assessments reflect the action staff should take in the event of a missing incident. High staffing levels provide children with the necessary support and supervision they need.

Children have access to the internet in the home. This is supervised by staff, in line with agreed risk assessments. Children can use social media to keep in touch with family members and others important to them. This increases children's confidence and skills in using technology in a safe and supported manner.

Staff recruitment practices are safe and robust. Managers undertake a range of checks prior to appointing new staff. This helps to prevent unsuitable adults from working with vulnerable children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers show a high degree of commitment to children and staff. They want the very best for children. They strive to ensure that the children's complex needs are met. Managers know the children in their care well. They ensure that care is individualised. Such support is also extended to the parents and carers of children. Family members feel fully included in their child's care and value the emotional support provided by managers and staff.

Managers and staff know the progress made by children. They work well with all agencies involved to ensure children's needs are met. Managers and staff consider how best to maximise the independence skills of children. They are currently in the

process of providing one child with additional facilities and equipment in their room, to support their ability to prepare simple meals.

Staff feel well supported and valued. They work as a team and feel that their views are valued and acted upon. Regular discussions take place between managers and staff about how to improve the care and support provided to children.

Staff receive regular supervision sessions and use these to consider the children they care for. However, following a recent safeguarding incident, the staff involved did not receive a formal supervision session for a considerable period. The recording of the supervision meeting does not clearly reflect the discussion of the incident, or the learning from it.

Staff receive training in a wide range of areas. The current training matrix suggests that some staff have not completed training on safeguarding children with learning disabilities, learning disability awareness, autism awareness or harmful sexual behaviours. Training in these areas would further strengthen the competency and skills of the staff team.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relating to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) This refers to staff understanding the importance of contacting the relevant managers and alerting other staff when a serious concern for a child's welfare arises.	1 October 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff receive supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care, particularly in relation to a recent serious safeguarding incident. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff undertake relevant training in relation to safeguarding disabled children, harmful sexual behaviours, learning disability and autism awareness. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: Leicester City Council

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

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: April Croft

Inspector

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector

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