

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

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2023

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	good
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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: 28 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2021	Full	Good
15/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/02/2019	Full	Good
12/03/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive outstanding care and support from a highly motivated and committed staff team. Staff meet children's complex needs to a very high standard. Staff know the children exceptionally well and can anticipate their needs in advance. As a result, children receive a superb level of support in a highly nurturing environment that supports their social and emotional growth.

The attention to detail to children moving into and out of the home is first rate. When it is time for children to move on to adult services, managers and staff work tirelessly with other professionals to ensure that children move on in a well-considered and supported way. Staff go above and beyond, and as a result, children experience successful transitions.

Staff are committed to children's progress and experiences. Children make excellent progress in relation to key areas of development. Staff speak with pride about children's achievements, and the smallest of achievements are acknowledged. This helps children to feel proud of themselves.

The managers have a comprehensive system to record and monitor children's progress. Staff record progress using photos as well as words. This means that information about their progress is accessible to all children.

Staff are highly attuned to the children they care for. This means that staff can understand children's verbal and non-verbal communication. Staff give children as much choice as possible. They use communication aids exceptionally well to help children express their needs and wishes.

Staff support children to participate in a wide range of activities. Children have lots of fun and laughter, creating wonderful memories that are captured in photos. Activities have included trips to the seaside and theme parks, holidays in caravans, horse-riding, and swimming.

Children are cared for by an exceptionally dedicated staff team. Staff morale is high, and they enjoy being at the home. All staff who were spoken with told the inspector that they love their jobs, and their caring attitude shines through in their interactions with children.

All children attend school. Staff have excellent communication with educational professionals. This joined-up approach ensures that children reach their full educational potential.

Staff understand the importance of relationships and support children to see their families and friends. One parent told the inspector, 'The staff team are brilliant; it is

not a job for them, it is a way of life. I don't see it as a children's home, I see them as family.'

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

Children are safe and feel safe in the home, and the home is a stable and nurturing long-term environment for children. As a result, children's emotional and social well-being improve. Children told the inspector that they are safe, they like the staff and are happy living at the home.

Incidents of aggression from children are low. When incidents do happen, children are helped by staff to de-escalate and calm down. Staff nurture children and show care through their responses when children are upset or angry. Risk management plans are in place, which staff follow. Children are supported with clear routines and structure, which helps them to feel safe and minimises incidents.

There have been three missing-from-home episodes since the last inspection. When a child goes missing, staff take appropriate action to safeguard children and follow the correct procedures to bring about their safe return. Due to children's vulnerabilities, staff search tirelessly for children when they are missing from home.

The selection of new staff coming to work at the home is carefully considered. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who are safe to work with children. New staff are supported by a team of highly experienced and skilled staff, and together, they ensure that children are appropriately supported, supervised and kept safe.

Overall, staff take swift and effective action to safeguard children when the need arises. Incident reports are thorough, and managers are quick to address any staff practice issues. However, on one occasion, managers did not ensure that staff recorded a detailed justification for the use of a physical intervention.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is motivated, nurturing and passionate about her role and the care provided to children. Together with the staff team, she has created a warm, loving and nurturing environment where children feel safe and well cared for.

Staff feel supported in their roles by managers. Staff receive regular supervision meetings with their manager that consider children's progress as well as staff well-being and development. Managers provide debriefs for staff after challenging incidents. Regular team meetings provide a forum for staff and managers to discuss and plan for children. Reflective practice is encouraged to ensure that staff develop and learn from incidents. Good support for staff helps to create a supportive environment that is better equipped to meet children's needs.

There is a comprehensive range of training opportunities, including essential courses on medication and first aid. In addition, staff are trained in specialist areas such as safeguarding disabled children, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism

spectrum disorder. Staff have achieved their level 3 diploma in residential childcare or are working towards this. As a result, staff have the relevant skills and knowledge for their roles.

Managers have robust monitoring and oversight of children's care plans, placement needs and progress. Detailed fortnightly reports highlight all aspects of children's care, and as a result, children's progress, needs and goals are well considered.

The manager and staff team have developed strong relationships with all the relevant professionals, including social workers and school staff. As a result, there is good communication between them, which promotes children's welfare.

The manager has not ensured that the home's statement of purpose is kept up to date or shared with Ofsted. In addition, she has not ensured that professionals and children are consulted with when she completes the six-month review of the quality of care. However, neither of these shortfalls have had an impact on the excellent care provided to children and the significant progress that children make.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the statement of purpose is kept up to date and shared with Ofsted within the required time frames. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 13, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that any restrictions or restraints used on a child are documented in detail. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.42)
- The registered person should ensure that they consult with children and professionals when completing the review of the quality of care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 15.2)

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, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: April Croft

Inspector

Debbie Holder, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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