

SC040491

Registered provider: Cornwall Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home operates as a short-break service and is run by the local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children who have learning difficulties. In total, there are 17 children who visit this home.

There is a suitably qualified and experienced manager in the home. The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2018.

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 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/12/2019	Full	Good
12/02/2019	Full	Good
06/06/2017	Full	Good
26/04/2017	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children coming for short breaks build trusting relationships with the adults who look after them. The staff know the children well and promote their welfare. This means that children are settled and have positive experiences. Outcomes for children using this short-break service are good.

Children who communicate non-verbally are supported to express their views. Staff are sensitive to subtle changes in behaviour that may indicate a child is in distress. When children's behaviour shows that they are distressed/upset, staff respond quickly to soothe them. This helps children to feel calm and reassured.

There is effective liaison between schools, the home and parents. Staff take time to write updates for parents on their children, and parents write requests to staff in a book that travels with the child to the home. This two-way communication system helps to ensure that the transition of children into and out of the home is smooth.

Children receive carefully planned, individualised care. Specially adapted toys, including trikes and climbing frames, allow children with additional needs to engage in activities that are enjoyed by all children. Children are supported to develop their independence and encouraged to learn new skills.

Bedrooms are personalised with belongings that are individual to each child. This means that despite a number of different children using each bedroom, when a new child arrives for their short break, the room is set up with items that are familiar to them.

This helps children to feel a sense of belonging.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. They build trusting relationships with the staff. Colourful photographs of the children enjoying activities are displayed around the home. These visual records help children to form strong memories of their time in the home.

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

Some of the children have complex and potentially life-threatening health conditions. Staff work hard to ensure that the children are cared for safely. Risk assessments are detailed and give staff the information they need to protect all children from harm. Detailed handover meetings ensure that the children's changing needs are communicated clearly and consistently to all adults who are involved in caring for them.

The accommodation is adapted so that children can take age-appropriate risks in an environment that is suitable for their individual needs. Regular communication with

social workers and health professionals means that safety plans are updated regularly as children's health conditions change.

Children are protected from discrimination and bullying. Safeguarding procedures are understood by all staff, and discussed in supervision and team meetings. As a result, staff have a good understanding of what action they should take if they are worried about a child.

Managers carefully plan rotas to ensure that the staff on shift have the right mix of experience to manage the children. Careful impact risk assessment of which children are placed alongside each other ensures that all children are kept safe.

Children have individual behaviour management plans that guide the staff in how to respond to challenging behaviours. Staff understand how to de-escalate and divert children to prevent them from harming themselves or others.

Learning from incidents is shared with the whole team. Practices are reviewed and changed when things go wrong. There is an open culture among staff. Staff feel able to admit to and learn from mistakes. This trusting environment helps to protect children from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced and committed manager has good oversight of all areas of the service. A culture of high expectations is embedded in records and staff practice. Supervision records show that reflective discussions are held with staff around practice, well-being and training. Managers observe staff practice and give feedback on areas for development. The regular management oversight and regular supervision mean that practice is reviewed and monitored effectively.

Staff are enthusiastic about their role. They enjoy coming to work, and feel supported. New staff are helped to settle into their role, and induction processes are thorough. Managers are committed to their own and the wider team's professional development. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have supported each other and have worked hard as a team to try to minimise any disruption to children's stays resulting from staffing shortages.

When managers identify changes in a child's needs, these are escalated promptly to the wider professional network. Managers work closely with health professionals to guide the staff and review plans, so as to make sure that the care provided is adapted to meet children's changing needs. The effective partnership working means that children receive good-quality care.

Social workers and parents are confident that the children are cared for well. One social worker said: 'I wish we had five Number Ones.'

On one occasion, there was a delay in notifying Ofsted of a serious incident when the manager was away from the home. The matter was reported to the designated

officer and learning from this incident has been used to inform practice, so as to avoid a similar situation.

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.

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action to be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday, and should particularly relate to occasions when the registered manager is absent. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

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: SC040491

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Accounts Payable, PO Box 727, Truro TR1 9GP

Responsible individual: Tony Phillips

Registered manager: Tamsin Moorhouse

Inspector

Angela Weston, Social Care Inspector

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