

SC040631

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a local authority. The staff care for up to four children who have experienced childhood trauma and have complex difficulties relating to their social and emotional well-being.

Four children currently live at the home. All four children were present during the inspection.

The post for a registered manager is currently vacant.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 9 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/05/2021	Full	Good
28/11/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Despite some positive changes since the assurance inspection, some shortfalls remain in safeguarding practice and leadership and management. The overall quality and experience for children therefore requires improvement. There is a development plan in place. However, this is not yet fully embedded in practice.

At the time of the inspection all but one child was enrolled in an education provision. Attendance for all children enrolled was erratic. Staff provided a lack of consistent incentives for children to attend. There is a development plan in place, however, this is not yet embedded in practice. Virtual school said that staff are proactive in advocating for children.

The children receive individualised care and support from a dedicated staff team. The approach from staff towards children is both nurturing and warm.

Staff spoken to are happy to work at this home and speak positively about the children. The staff communicate well with parents and keep them up to date about their child. Parents are positive about the care and support that the children receive.

Most children say they like the staff. They feel able to speak to staff about their worries and concerns. The children know that the staff listen to them and value their opinions. The children feel heard and understood. Managers respond quickly to children's complaints. As a result, trusting relationships develop between the staff and children.

The staff work well with other professionals. Staff advocate on behalf of the children to ensure that these external agencies provide the support the children need.

The staff actively promote contact between children and their families. This enhances children's links with their families and keeps them connected with the people who are important to them.

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

The children smoke in one area on site and vape in the home. This puts children's health at risk. The response from staff to address these behaviours is inconsistent and not in accordance with the home's statement of purpose.

Dynamics between the children are sometimes of concern. Staff's response to children's behaviour is inconsistent. As a result, children do not receive clear

messages about expectations. In addition, they do not receive consistently good support to learn how to manage difficult situations.

Staff took appropriate action in respect of two significant safeguarding incidents in the home. These incidents were reported to relevant safeguarding professionals. However, the manager did not notify these to Ofsted. Therefore, the regulator was not aware of significant events that occurred in the home and was unable to monitor safe practice.

Some improvements to the home have been made since the last inspection. However, damages to the building and fire doors have not been repaired, and the bathrooms require redecoration.

The arrangements to protect children are generally effective. Staff have positive relationships with the professional network to safeguard children. Professionals spoken to have no concerns about staff practice.

Staff understand the individual risks for each child. The manager ensures that thorough risk assessments are in place for each child. The children's risk management plans are kept up to date and reflect their changing needs.

The staff team continues to grow. New staff have the necessary skills and experience to care for children. The manager ensures that the relevant statutory checks are undertaken before staff undertake any work with children. Safer recruitment practice is robust. This helps to prevent unsuitable people gaining employment in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is relatively new to the role. She has submitted an application to Ofsted.

The manager knows the children and staff well. The staff feel well supported by the manager and described her as 'supportive and approachable'. There are few changes in the staff team. This ensures the children receive continuity of care and are able to develop positive relationships with the staff. This enhances the care of children.

The manager is working with the staff team to improve consistency of behaviour management. However, this is not fully embedded in practice as yet. Without united boundaries in place, the children's response to situations is variable.

Staff training records are unclear. It is therefore difficult to track staff's development and further learning needs. This lack of detail could result in missed opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and practice.

The quality of recording is variable. Sometimes the level of detail is insufficient to demonstrate the actions that staff take to meet the children's needs.

Managers' oversight has improved since the last assurance inspection. There is now clear evidence of curiosity, reflection and actions to be undertaken, which are then followed up.

The manager knows the areas for development. She is reflective and uses complaints as a learning opportunity for the staff team. The manager is passionate about improving the experiences for children within the home. She has actively begun to implement change. However, the improvements are not yet fully embedded into practice.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))	28 August 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those	28 August 2023

expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)(v))	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(d))	28 August 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	28 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that each child is supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC040631

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7QQ

Responsible individual: Paul Thomas

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector
Faye McCarthy, Social Care Inspector

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M1 2WD

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