

SC040633

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to five children who are experiencing emotional and social difficulties. There were five children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 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	good
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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: 21 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2023	Full	Good
25/05/2021	Full	Outstanding
21/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
09/01/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The care provided to children at this home is exceptional. The staff are warm, nurturing and dedicated. They support the children to feel valued and safe, and make sure that the home has a family feel. One external professional said, 'There is a real sense of belonging for the children at this home. As a result, children who have previously found it difficult to settle, have now established themselves. They feel safe, secure and happy.'

All the children talk positively about the staff and the great relationships that they share with them. Staff genuinely care about the well-being of children. One child said that this home was the best children's home that they had lived in and rated it 9.9 out of 10.

All children are making significant progress from their starting points. The highly effective staff support has enabled one child to make substantial changes. They are now settled and engage with professionals. They are now considerably safer than they were before they moved in. This is because staff have helped them to identify and keep away from risky situations. Another child has been supported to develop their communication skills and confidence. This child has become more sociable and communicative with staff and their peers. As a result, they are now much more confident and able to join in group activities.

All the children are either attending school or engaging in another form of education. Staff are tenacious and advocate strongly for children who have previously struggled to access the right education. They escalate any concerns to senior leaders to ensure that children's education is given priority. The commitment of staff has helped one child who was previously highly resistant to education to re-engage in formal learning. This child now talks to staff about their aspirations for the future. Education professionals are impressed how well the staff work in partnership with them and promote extra-curricular activities. These include choir, dance classes, juditsu, gymnastics and swimming. Staff arrange fun events, including baking competitions and Halloween celebrations. These activities give children positive experiences and build their confidence.

The staff understand the impact of trauma on the children. They develop meticulous plans, with professionals and family members, to offer the best support to each child. When children have complex emotional or psychological needs, they are always offered specialist support. The manager also supports the staff to use research and training to inform their practice.

The reliability and emotional availability of staff underpin the exceptional relationships that they develop with the children. The children, many of whom have previously had difficulties in forming trusting relationships, trust these staff. This has

built a solid base for the children to begin to move forward positively in their lives and has had an immensely positive influence on their progress.

The staff go above and beyond to maintain and promote safe family relationships. The staff are committed to the children and provide bespoke support over extended periods of time. The quality of relationships between staff and parents is impressive. One parent said that the staff 'have given my child the chance to shine'.

The staff have been innovative in ensuring one child and their family are supported in a very difficult and complex situation. As a result, the child trusts the staff and feels supported by them.

Staff prepare children for their futures. For example, staff helped one child to learn how to use public transport. This child now travels independently to college every day. This has boosted their confidence and self-esteem. The staff talk with children about their aspirations and how they might work to achieve these.

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

The children feel safe and protected by the staff. Children rarely go missing. For one child, this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Staff understand what matters most to the children. Children's views are listened to and respected and, when possible, acted on. Children say that they feel heard and know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns. This helps to keep children safe and makes them feel valued.

The staff work very closely with safeguarding professionals. One professional said, 'I attribute the success of keeping the child safe to the relationships that staff have built with them. The child understands risk better now.'

The staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of each of the children's risks and how to manage these. Risk assessments and safety plans are individual to each child and are detailed and kept under regular review.

Staff manage difficult behaviour well. Any consequences used in response to inappropriate behaviour are proportionate and fair. Physical restraint is rare and only used as a last resort. Any incidents of restraint are clearly documented and monitored.

Safeguarding allegations are infrequent. However, the manager and staff know what to do should any concerns arise. When any incidents occur, the relevant people are informed and plans are put in place swiftly to reduce risks to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager and her senior leadership team are a well-established and long-standing team. They are inspirational, confident and have high aspirations for their children. This ethos radiates across the whole staff team. Managers ensure that staff consistently go above and beyond to achieve the best possible outcomes for children. The level of care provided is exceptional and bespoke.

Leaders know the children well and build strong and trusting relationships with them. As a result, children feel supported, safe and secure.

Staff and managers want the children to succeed. They work tirelessly to ensure that the children have solid foundations that allow them to shine. The team is proud of, and celebrates, children's achievements. This is evident in pictures, displays and certificates on show throughout the home.

The staff team is stable and morale is high. The staff feel heard, valued and incredibly well supported by managers. They describe their managers as 'inspirational' and credit them with enabling staff to do the high-quality work that they do. The staff are proud that they have created what they describe as 'an amazing family environment' for children. One staff member said that it is an 'absolute privilege' to be part of the home's 'family'.

Managers and leaders know the home's strengths and weaknesses well. Staff are fully involved in service development. A learning culture is embedded in practice. Any incidents or errors are reviewed to enhance practice. This highly effective monitoring allows for an in-depth oversight of practice and enhances the care that children receive.

Leaders and staff have close working relationships with other professionals, who all hold the home in very high esteem, describing the manager and staff as highly child-focused.

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: SC040633

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

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

Responsible individual: Paul Thomas

Registered manager: Sharon Newton

Inspector

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

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