

SC042978

Registered provider: Lincolnshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation to children and young people with a learning difficulty and/or emotional and behavioural needs.

Since the last inspection, this home has ceased providing short breaks for disabled children. It now accommodates up to four children with a learning difficulty and/or emotional and behavioural needs.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 March 2024

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	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: 9 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/11/2021	Full	Outstanding
06/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
09/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
20/09/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress. The staff team shows a commitment towards supporting children. The children are developing very positive relationships with staff. This helps children to settle in following their move to the home and gets them on track to make progress. The developing relationships children have with staff also support children to feel safe.

Staff know the children's needs well. They understand the need for a calming environment, especially at times of transition to school. Staff provide low stimulus activities at these times. When children are less anxious, they enjoy a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate activities.

Children's health needs are well known and met by staff. Staff understand the complexities of each child. Staff work with a variety of involved health professionals. They work very closely with the complex needs team. There is a good therapeutic approach which runs through many of the children's plans and assessments. When needed, plans and assessments are reviewed and adapted in line with the children's presenting needs.

A strength of this home is the collaborative approach to all areas of care. Good communication, and the sharing of information with schools, means that the chances of a consistent approach with children is greater. For the children at this home, consistency is important.

Staff support children to express their wishes and feelings. This takes place through regular children's meetings. Children get the opportunity to meet with each other and staff, to plan, and celebrate recent successes.

Children live in a home that meets their specific care needs. There is ample space, and a choice of communal areas. Children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. Children are encouraged to name rooms within the house. One example is a room that has been developed with advice from the play therapist and has created a calming and low stimulus environment.

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

Safeguarding incidents are dealt with effectively by managers. Managers appropriately share information with stakeholders. When there are concerns about practice, managers ask for a review of their safeguarding processes by the local authority designated officer. This transparency means that an already well organised safeguarding process has an independent overview. Because of this, children become safer.

Children have been physically restrained. Clear behaviour support plans detail what holds are permitted and what measures are needed to be tried beforehand. Staff try several less restrictive measures before holding children. Managers have oversight of physical interventions and try to find the reasons for children's behaviours. Children are offered the opportunity to speak to someone after any incident, and staff are always offered a debrief.

Managers and staff are constantly evolving how they care for the children. When it has been recognised that a physical intervention is not wholly successful, then, staff reflect on this, and changes are made. Because of this willingness to change and adapt, means that children are cared for safer.

Children have not gone missing from this home. However, the manager and staff ensure that they are prepared for this eventuality. Risk assessments show what staff must do if children do go missing from this home. This is further strengthened by risk management meetings, links with the community police team and missing from care coordinators.

However, there has been an isolated instance where staff were not diligent in ensuring children were monitored adequately. Children managed to leave the building and go to the outside road. At this point they were unsafe.

Staff complete the required safeguarding training. The training topics are centred around the children's needs. Safeguarding is discussed in each staff member's one to-one meeting with their manager. Safeguarding matters are also discussed in team meetings. This supports staff to develop their knowledge and understand their role.

Medication administration processes are safe. This is because staff have a well-structured, and organised system. Additionally, staff are trained, and know what to do if a mistake is made, or an error is found.

Only staff that have been through a robust, safer recruitment process get to work with children who are vulnerable due to adverse life experiences.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is currently no registered manager. However, the home has an acting manager who has applied for Ofsted registration. The manager is motivated and enthusiastic. They have an ambitious vision for the home. They lead a motivated team of staff who say that they love their jobs.

Leaders and managers have developed effective processes to maintain oversight of all aspects of the children's care. They have ensured that a system is in place for staff to record children's progress and development. Currently, this means that there are records to evidence conversations with children, meetings with staff and robust oversight of the home.

Staff can access a wide range of training courses. Learning and development begin at induction stage with essential training, including how to manage challenging behaviours. After induction, staff continue with their learning by way of a blended approach of online and face-to-face training courses.

Managers have ensured that staff have access to effective and reflective supervision and team meetings. Managers check their staff's safeguarding knowledge and competence. The children are spoken about in detail.

Team meetings take place regularly and have a focus. Staff also receive support and guidance from therapeutic services. This multi-agency partnership helps to effectively shape practice in the home with positive impact upon the care of the children.

Managers ensure that a robust scheme of fire safety checks are regular and effective. To further strengthen fire safety, staff undertake direct work with children on this topic. Children have learnt what to do if they need to evacuate the home. They have also learnt about the dangers of having a vape in their bedrooms. As a result of this direct work children learn how to be safer.

Managers are actively developing a strong staff team. However, at times staff are utilised from other homes owned by this provider. This has meant that on some shifts, children are cared for by staff that are not as familiar to the children.

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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b)) This relates to children being monitored and effectively safeguarded on the premises.	30 April 2024

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: SC042978

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices,
Newland, LINCOLN LN1 1YL

Responsible individual: Tara Jones

Registered manager: Position vacant

Inspector

Simon Hunter, social care inspector

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