

SC042994

Registered provider: Lincolnshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides short breaks for up to six children with learning disabilities. Two children were using the service at the time of the inspection.

The manager is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

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 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2022	Full	Good
17/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/12/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home provides a nurturing environment. Staff show a real sense of emotional warmth and understanding towards the children. The team is committed to providing children with a good standard of care and support. As a result, children can grow and develop during their time accessing the service.

Some areas of the home are looking tired. There are stains on carpets, marks on paintwork, and children's bedding is old and faded. There are also items of equipment in the sensory room that no longer work. The manager has worked with the local authority to secure funding. This has now been approved and all improvement works have been planned.

Good staffing levels mean that children enjoy quality time with the staff. Children participate in a wide range of activities. These can include sensory play, activities in the garden, trampolining, and arts and crafts. These are captured in an array of photos and memory books. This provides children with positive memories. One parent said, 'It is home from home for my son, I know they love him.'

The manager and staff understand the importance of careful transition planning. They use their skills and experience to support families with future changes as children move on to adult care.

The manager provides children with a copy of the children's guide. However, this does not contain relevant information about the children's commissioner.

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

Parents are informed of incidents in a timely manner. One Parent said, 'They always inform me of incidents or if they have any concerns.'

The location risk assessment provides staff with sufficient measures to safeguard children from risks in the community. However, the manager has not consulted with relevant people about the appropriateness of the location of the home, including any risks associated with the area.

If staff have concerns regarding a child's welfare when they arrive for their stay at the home, individual safeguarding checklists are completed. These provide detailed information that is shared with the social worker. This supports a joined-up approach with local authorities to safeguard children in their care.

Complaints are escalated and investigated appropriately. The manager ensures that they promptly inform the local authority following any complaint. This ensures that safeguarding protocols are consistently followed.

Accident forms are routinely completed after a child has had an accident. However, they do not always contain accurate or essential information. For example, one child's accident form number did not cross-reference with their daily summary or specify treatment they received for their injuries.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager leads by example and promotes a culture of calm and positivity. She is supportive to staff and caring towards the children. The manager has high aspirations for the children and the staff team and understands the strengths and the areas that need further development.

Staff have a genuine sense of commitment and loyalty. They feel valued and share the manager's passion to improve children's experiences and outcomes. As a result, staff turnover is low. One staff member said, 'The whole management team are incredibly supportive, and you can feel how genuinely passionate they are about our young people, our service and what we do, which in turn inspires us.'

The manager has updated children's risk assessments and some of the children's plans. However, there are some records that do not yet have sufficient oversight and the manager did not have an informed workforce development plan for the home.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision. However, not all supervision meetings provide enough evidence to show how staff reflect on their practice.

The staff have good and strong partnerships with external professionals and families. They share information and establish effective channels of communication. Social workers' feedback about the staff is positive. One member of staff said, 'There has been lots of joint-up work done together to support transitions, ensuring that the young people's needs and listening to their voice are at the centre of the work.'

Staff understand children's individual healthcare needs. Staff receive regular, up-to-date training, and they work closely with health colleagues, including an occupational health therapist. However, not all staff have received the required training to communicate effectively with each child according to their identified communication needs. This prevents them from supporting children to improve their communication skills.

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, The 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 specifically relates to ensuring that records of accidents are clear, detailed and demonstrate management oversight, reflection and learning.	1 January 2024
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h))	1 January 2024

This specifically relates to the registered person using monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements to the quality of care provided in the home. It also relates to the manager ensuring that staff have the required communication training to meet the individual needs of the children.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that systems are in place for all staff, including the manager, to receive supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that when carrying out a review of the premises, they consult with, and consider the views of, each relevant person. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that they have a workforce development plan which can fulfil the workforce requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)

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: SC042994

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Tara Jones

Registered manager: Victoria Cooke

Inspectors

Linda Mason, Social Care Inspector
Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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