

# SC043255

Registered provider: Lincolnshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A local authority owns this home. It is registered to provide care for up to six children who may require support with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is suitably qualified and experienced.

There were six children living at the home at the time of inspection.

### Inspection dates: 2 and 3 October 2024

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
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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 | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 5 October 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 05/10/2023      | Full            | Good                 |
| 17/01/2023      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 22/02/2022      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 27/01/2020      | Full            | Outstanding          |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Overall, children's experiences and progress are good. Interactions between staff and children are relaxed and supportive. The home feels welcoming, and staff have put thought into creating spaces the children will enjoy using. For example, there is a cinema room for the children to spend social time together, and this was something they had asked for.

The home has recently been renovated to a high standard and is presented well. It is welcoming and comfortable. The views of the children have been taken into consideration. The children have been able to personalise their bedrooms and make their own unique living space. This adds to children's sense of belonging. Bathrooms upstairs remain in need of renovation to become a more hygienic space for children.

Despite changes within the staff team, children have a core person in their lives with whom they have a relationship. Staff are caring and nurturing in their approach to the children. Over time, this has enabled trusted and positive relationships to develop. Children share their worries with staff, and they know that staff will respond in a caring way.

Children's time with families is encouraged and supported. Staff ensure that there are arrangements in place for children to spend time with people who are important to them. There is overall good communication with family members and professionals. Staff supervise time with family, where necessary, and use this space to build positive relationships with family members. This contributes to the stability of children's placements.

Staff understand the importance of education. The manager works well with external professionals to find alternative education for children who require this. One child is not attending education and has no routine during the day. There has been a lack of structure and routine for the child. This has impacted potential progress within education. Plans are in place for the child to support them on an emotional school-based avoidance plan, but this has not been consistently followed by the staff team.

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

Staff apply a restorative approach in relation to behaviour management, supporting children to learn and be educated rather than punished. For one child, there has been a significant positive impact through effective management of serious incidents. Reflection and learning have been a priority for the child. This has been achieved through a focus on relationships with the child, resulting in a recent decrease in incidents.

Physical interventions are only used as a last resort. There has been a significant reduction in physical interventions for children. There has been a focus on relationship building in the home, which has impacted positively on behaviour management. The recruitment of staff is managed well, with recruitment procedures designed to safeguard children. Safer recruitment practices and protocols are followed. This means that prospective staff are subject to clear vetting processes. This reduces the risk of unsuitable adults working in the home.

Staff do not always put in place the strategies set out in children's risk assessments. Risk assessment documents have not been updated with information and this has created confusion in the team. On occasion, this has resulted in staff not being fully aware of children's safety plans.

Medication processes are not robust. There have been errors made in disposing of a controlled drug. The system for disposing of medication, and the recording of the administration of such, is not adequate. The manager has not demonstrated oversight of such matters.

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

Leaders and managers are passionate about providing children with nurturing care. There has been an emphasis on making improvements to the home and the children having a family home to be proud of. Leaders and managers have started to create a culture of safe and caring relationships in the home, which has filtered through to the staff team.

Staff do not all have relevant training to meet children's individual needs. The registered manager has ensured that staff have completed mandatory training in line with the induction process to support children. Staff have not completed the specific training required for one child who has lived in the home for a few years. This has resulted in staff not being fully equipped with the skills to support and meet the child's needs.

The registered manager has good relationships with external agencies. She works in partnership with other professionals. Decisions are made in consultation, ensuring that plans for children are well considered. Children trust and confide in the registered manager. The registered manager is child-focused and ensures that the child's voice is heard. As a result, children receive individualised and coordinated care.

Staff said that they enjoy their work, and they spoke kindly about the children. They have felt the pressures of lower staffing levels but have shown commitment to the children. There have been some occasions when staff have not worked as a team as well as expected. This has the potential to impact on the consistency of children's care.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision discussions that enable them to reflect on their practice and professional development. Managers and senior staff provide supervision to the workforce. The quality of the supervision process and written records is variable, which means that there is inconsistency across the team. As a result,

some staff may be at a disadvantage, which could affect their practice and overall performance.

## 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        |
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| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f))</p> <p>This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that there is sufficiency of staff in place to meet children's needs in line with a consistent approach. Staff need the appropriate training to meet individual children's needs.</p> | 03 January 2025 |

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| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.<br/>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that records of restraint are completed and monitored appropriately by the manager.</p> | <p>3 January 2025</p>   |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>15 December 2024</p> |

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| <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with children's individual risk assessments and that these are completed with up-to-date information.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; and</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally.</p> <p>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all children are engaging in education, whether within or outside of the home, and that staff are supporting and encouraging this, and supporting routines for children.</p> | <p>3 January 2025</p> |
| <p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular the registered person must ensure that—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>3 January 2025</p> |



medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a))

This specifically relates to ensuring that the safe storage and disposal of medication and clear management oversight of this are in place.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff are supported to complete the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. (Guide to Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. (Guide to Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

## 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:** SC043255

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Lincolnshire County Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Tara Jones

**Registered manager:** Kelsie Tyrrell

## Inspector

Eleanor Quanbrough, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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