

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 with social and/or emotional difficulties.

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

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
22/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
27/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
17/10/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy living in this home and they feel safe. One child said, 'I really like it here, I would not change anything.' This provides children with a feeling of stability and belonging.

Staff understand and appreciate the need for children to be able to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Staff recognise that this part of the work is essential for children who do not live within their own communities.

Staff promote education and communicate on a regular basis with all the education provisions that the children attend. Education is individualised and based on children's specific educational needs. Staff are aware of the children's educational targets. As a result, the children are continuing to develop skills and make educational progress.

Children have access to a range of healthcare services. Staff support each child to ensure that their health needs are met.

Staff consult with children through key-work sessions and 'chill and chat' meetings. This support helps children to express their views, wishes and feelings. These are supported with pictures and photos that provide children with lovely memories.

Children have regular access to an independent advocate, and are actively encouraged by the staff to meet with her.

Children and staff take part in charity fundraising activities. This gives the children a sense of togetherness and connection with the staff in the home. By supporting local charities, children develop a feeling of inclusivity and a sense of accomplishment.

Staff help to prepare children when moving on from the home. For example, one child moved successfully to semi-independent living and continues to maintain contact with the staff by telephone. The manager and the staff closely work with the team around the child. This ensures that children are prepared both practically and emotionally when leaving.

The home environment needs repair. Some parts of the premises lack a homely feel. Children's bedrooms are not always kept tidy, and some redecoration is required. Staff do not always consider creative ways to help children to keep their bedrooms clean, tidy, and a calm space. This makes it difficult for children to invest in the home or show any respect or pride in their surroundings. A plan is in place to address the shortfalls in the environment, including the redecoration of the home.

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

Safeguarding arrangements require improvement. Staff do not always put in place the strategies set out in children's risk assessments. This has led to incidents of allegations against staff and safeguarding incidents involving the children, which could have been avoided.

The manager has carried out a local area risk assessment. However, details of consultation with the relevant services are missing from the assessment. This is a missed opportunity to reduce risk and fully review the home's location.

Missing-from-care procedures are written in line with the children's plans. However, managers have not ensured that children are offered a return-home interview after a period of being missing. There is no evidence that the home's manager has challenged the local authority in relation to this shortfall.

Staff apply a restorative approach in relation to behaviour management, supporting children to learn and be educated, rather than being punished. Conversations and key-work sessions are used to motivate and support children to develop a sense of self-worth and understanding. However, managers have not ensured that the same level of diligence and oversight is in place when restraint is used. Children and staff do not always receive debriefs within expected periods following concerning incidents. As a result, there are limited opportunities to evaluate and learn from incidents to support children in the future.

The recruitment of staff is managed well, and the recruitment procedures are designed to safeguard the child. 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.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified, experienced, and passionate about their role. She shows commitment to the children and the staff team. One member of staff said, 'I have never felt so supported by a management team, and I know I can always go and speak to someone if I need any guidance or assistance, or if I have any worries.'

The manager has established a good support network around the home, with strong links to the local community and close working partnership with other agencies. The home has worked proactively with the local fire station, including by engaging the children in football matches. This provides children with a sense of belonging.

Team members benefit from regular personal supervision and appraisals, in which they feel able to discuss the impact of their work. This helps to provide support to a new staff team through a particularly difficult period, who display resilience, which helps them to support children to develop and grow.

Staff are trained to meet the needs of the children. They have completed specific training highlighted within children's plans. However, the manager should ensure that all staff are supported to complete the appropriate qualification set out in regulation by the relevant date.

The turnover of staff has impacted on the manager's ability to spend time monitoring and quality reviewing systems, leading to these becoming less effective. As a result, management have not had a comprehensive oversight of recorded incidents.

The home's most-recent statement of purpose is not in line with regulation. It does not accurately reflect the services that children should expect to receive. This means that Ofsted does not have the most up-to-date information about the care provided to 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 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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; 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) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(vii)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that general maintenance of the home and improvements required within the children's bedrooms are addressed without delay.	1 December 2023
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 staff—	1 December 2023

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with children's individual risk assessments.	
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— 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)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered person using monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	1 December 2023
The registered person must ensure that— 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— details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure;	1 December 2023

a description of the measure and its duration; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; 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”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and 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. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that records of restraint are completed and signed as part of effective monitoring.	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children’s home a statement (“the statement of purpose”) which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b) (5)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the statement of purpose reflects the registration of the home, and this is kept under review to ensure that it is accurate.	1 December 2023
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the	1 December 2023

purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).

When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))

This specifically relates the registered person ensuring that they consult with and take into account the views of each relevant person when conducting the review.

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)

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

Responsible individual: Tara Jones

Registered manager: Katherine Sansom

Inspectors

Kathryn Hurley, Social Care Inspector
Linda Mason, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023