

SC044880

Registered provider: Brighton & Hove City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority home that provides a mixture of short breaks and full-time accommodation for up to eight disabled children.

The home has two managers who share the registered manager role. Both are suitably qualified; one registered with Ofsted in 2013 and one in 2015.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2018

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	good
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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: 8 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2017	Full	Good
14/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
06/07/2016	Full	Good
24/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))	28/12/2018
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.	28/09/2018

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. The registered person must ensure that no child is subject to any reprisal for making a complaint or representation. The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5))	
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	31/08/2018
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a))	31/08/2018
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))	31/08/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive excellent care and support from a team of staff dedicated to improving their quality of life. Comprehensive 'essential life plans' provide the staff with a clear outline of the children's needs and of how they can be met. As a result, the staff know the children extremely well and work together to help them achieve their goals.

Preparation for adulthood is an important part of the overall ethos and culture of the home. Children are supported to develop from the moment they move in or stay. Lead support workers personalise activity planners and match opportunities to their interests. This means that children learn new skills while having fun. Children make meaningful progress that prepares them well for their futures.

The staff actively encourage the children to make friends. Joint activities give the children the chance to pursue their hobbies together. The staff also go out of their way to find external groups where children can meet new friends. One child, spoken to during the inspection, delighted in telling the inspector how much he is doing, including, for the first time in his life, meeting up with friends in the community.

A strong emphasis is placed on helping the children to communicate. The staff use a variety of methods to ensure that their wishes and feelings are understood. Social stories are used effectively to do this, and these help children to understand changes in their routines or lives. Children are enabled to improve their communication in purposeful ways.

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

Safeguarding children is seen as a priority. Managers are committed to maintaining high staffing ratios despite the pressure this places on resources. This means that the children get the support they need.

The staff have developed effective working relationships with colleagues from education and the child and adolescent mental health services. Using their combined knowledge and skills, they have developed strategies to help children manage their anxieties. This means that incidents of challenging behaviour are reducing in frequency and intensity.

Feedback from parents about the service varies. Some have used the complaints policy to express their issues and concerns. However, responses from leaders and managers have left them feeling that they are not listened to. Records viewed during the inspection support this view, as they do not evidence outcomes or whether the matters have been resolved.

Recruitment practice does not always follow good practice guidance. Records checked on inspection show that managers have not always carried out full pre-employment checks. This includes not verifying references and home addresses.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Two very experienced and qualified managers lead the home. They work extremely hard to balance the competing needs and demands, placed on the service from senior managers, with the children and families they support. At times, this has resulted in having to take children in an emergency. While this has been in that child's best interest, it has meant that other children have had their short breaks cancelled.

The managers are very child focused in their approach. They act as good role models and the staff spoken to described them as very supportive and hands on. This contributes directly to the high standard of care. However, this means that the management tasks do not always receive the attention they require. An example of this includes managers failing to obtain relevant documentation from the placing authorities.

Reports from the independent visitor are informative. They provide a useful insight into the management of the home. They also capture the excellent progress the children make. However, they do not clearly say whether the independent visitor considers that the children are effectively safeguarded. Although the impact of this is minimal, it would be useful information for managers evaluating the service.

The staff team has access to a variety of training that helps staff carry out their roles effectively. However, not all staff hold the relevant qualification. Leaders and managers are aware of this and have plans in place to address this shortfall over the next few months.

Staff rotas do not contain all of the information required by the regulations; specifically, the names of all staff working in the home are not recorded.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC044880

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Brighton BN3 3BQ

Responsible individual: Naomi Cox

Registered manager: Karen Rusbridge
Victoria Witham

Inspectors

Amanda Harvey, social care inspector

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