

SC045408

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides a short-break service for children who are having an emotional crisis at home. It is part of a wider service for children experiencing poor mental health and is operated by Surrey County Council and the local NHS trust.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 May 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: 29 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2022	Full	Good
29/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/12/2018	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child was staying at the home during the inspection. Inspectors observed positive interactions between staff and the child. The child said that staff listen and are friendly. Staff form positive relationships with children in their care.

Planning for admissions is thorough. A nurse completes a suitability assessment for each child before admission. This assessment forms the foundation of the child's placement plan and risk assessments. These reports are robust and reflective of the child's needs. They rely on input from the child's entire support network. This approach ensures that the relevant information is available to support the best outcomes for children who stay at the home.

Parents give high praise about the care that their children receive. One parent described the service as 'fantastic' and said that they wished it was available across the country.

Children's views are sought to inform placement objectives. This takes place both pre- and post-placement. Most children make progress during their short stay in this home.

All children and parents must give consent on admission. The consent forms are comprehensive and located on each child's file. Children have input into their placement plans. The child's voice is evident in this home.

Children take part in a variety of activities when they stay at the home. These include trips to the cinema and gym, going on walks and going bowling. Children can cook their own meals alongside staff. This supports children with their independence and well-being.

All children have access to the 'Hope service' which provides education, therapy and extra activities off site. Staff support children with their education.

From the time of admission, staff are focused on supporting children through their next transition. One external professional said that staff had been 'integral' in transition support for children. Staff are committed to providing the best outcomes for children.

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

Staff know children well. They are competent in supporting children who are facing a high level of mental and emotional crisis. Risk assessments are thorough and updated daily to reflect any change in behaviour or need, with consistent management oversight. Children are safe during their stay at this home.

Children rarely go missing from this home. This is due to the care given by staff and good staff-to-child ratios. If a child does go missing, staff respond immediately.

Professionals and parents spoken to during this inspection raised no safeguarding concerns. Positive relationships with the staff team are a strength of this service. Police have regular updates with the management team. This partnership allows for a planned care approach that is proactive, as opposed to reactive. This practice keeps children safe in the home and the wider community.

Staff report safeguarding notifications to the relevant professionals. Notifications are timely and relevant. Professionals say that staff work well to ensure that children are safe.

Safer recruitment of staff is thorough. Interviews are carried out by a diverse panel of senior leaders, staff and care leavers. This ensures that the right people are employed to support children.

Staff build relationships with the children and their extended networks quickly. However, some parents expressed concerns that they are not informed of incidents as quickly as they would like. This continues to be an area for improvement.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2023. She has the relevant experience and is a confident leader. All staff feedback has been positive, describing the manager as supportive and approachable. This leads to a calm and stable feel in the home.

The home reopened to full capacity in January 2023. The senior leaders and managers have managed the reopening effectively, prioritising the needs of the children and ensuring that the staff team was at full capacity and staff had completed all training before more children were admitted.

The manager knows the children well. She is a good advocate for ensuring that children are placed appropriately in the home. The manager is committed to the children and to progressing the service further.

Managers and leaders understand the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager completes monthly monitoring reports for senior leaders. These are robust and identify areas for growth. This provides an added layer of monitoring, which ensures that gaps in the service are identified and improvements are made.

Regular supervision and yearly performance discussions are embedded in practice. Staff development is enhanced by a continued menu of training reflective of the needs of children that they care for. Most staff have completed all mandatory training. However, shortfalls were identified in the recording of staff training. Specifically, the expected timescales for completion of some mandatory training were missing.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (d)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that safeguarding incidents are shared with parents in a timely manner.	24 July 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. In particular, ensure the recording of staff training is consistent, with specific reference to timescales. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: SC045408

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Registered provider address: Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7QQ

Responsible individual: Lisa Wade

Registered manager: Samantha Heighes

Inspectors

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

Jane Balfe, Social Care Inspector

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