

# SC051513

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to four children. At the time of the inspection, no children were living at the home.

The home has been without a manager since June 2023.

### Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2024

|                                                                                           |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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|                                                             |                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|

|                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | inadequate |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 7 June 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 07/06/2022      | Full            | Good                            |
| 22/03/2022      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |
| 15/12/2021      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 07/05/2019      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

The home closed in September 2022 due to damage caused by water pipes, resulting in the home not being fit for purpose. Children were moved to other provisions close by. This has led to a long period where no children are living at the home.

Following the damage being repaired, children from a sister home temporarily moved in. This was while their home had a major refurbishment in October 2023. Staff and managers worked hard to ensure that children were involved in the plans to move. Children were able to choose and personalise their bedrooms, which were carefully prepared for them before they moved in.

Children lived at the home for four months. Children spoken to said they liked being at the home and that it was 'big'. During this time, children maintained their education placements and continued to attend daily. As a result, children continued to engage well with their learning and made progress.

While living at the home, children were encouraged and supported to access a range of activities in the local area. They were also supported to attend their interests, hobbies and clubs. As a result, children continued to develop confidence and self-esteem.

The staff team showed a genuine commitment towards supporting children. The children have positive relationships with staff. This helped children to settle in following their temporary move to the home. This has been critical in enabling children to build secure and meaningful relationships with a team of staff they know, trust and rely on.

Children were supported to attend all their health appointments. Staff continued to liaise with relevant health professionals, and advice and guidance were followed. Children stayed registered with all health services. This consistency and continuity help to maintain children's physical well-being.

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

Staff receive the required safeguarding training. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item in each member's one-to-one meeting with their manager but is not always discussed. This does not always provide staff with the opportunities to reflect and develop their practice. This limits the impact of reflection or learning outcomes for staff.

Safeguarding matters are discussed in team meetings. This supports staff to develop their knowledge and understand their role. Additionally, team meetings act as a vehicle for staff development and help them to have a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities in the team.

Managers regularly update children's individual risk assessments and support plans. These key documents outline children's risks and needs and provide guidance to staff on how to support children. However, during one incident, staff failed to adhere to the child's relevant plans and assessments. This resulted in the child's behaviour escalating and a staff member being injured.

Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort, although this is minimal. This is to prevent children from placing themselves and others at risk of serious harm. There is thorough management oversight of such practice. When reviewing the records, the manager looks for possible practice development needs. Staff speak to children to understand their views after a physical restraint has taken place.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The home has been without a registered manager since June 2023. The home's statement of purpose has not been updated since September 2021. During a temporary stay of children at the home, it was managed by a manager who has yet to register.

During this time, the manager led the home through a period of instability. She has dealt with considerable staffing issues with the support of the deputy manager and service manager. This has taken a lot of time and energy. However, the manager has demonstrated resilience despite this and ensured that the impact on children has been minimal.

During the stay at the home, there were changes in the staff team. Not all staff have the training to support them to meet children's needs. This includes training on subjects such as cerebral palsy, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder and physical interventions. One staff member said, 'I feel if I had all the correct training before coming into the home, it would give me a better understanding of what is expected of me and more confident to do my job.'

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. Children's needs are reviewed and discussed. Managers and staff learn from each other. These meetings also promote team-building and help to strengthen staff relationships. As a result, children enjoy a supportive home environment and care.

The children returned to their substantive home in February 2024. The manager and staff ensured that this was a positive return for the children and was well planned. However, during their stay, there were occasions where there were no monthly reports from an independent person. The home continues to remain without a manager and there are no current plans to recruit one until a major renovation has been completed.

## 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     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and</p> <p>the registered provider—</p> <p>is an organisation or a partnership;</p> <p>does not satisfy regulation 28; or</p> <p>is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home.</p> <p>If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of—</p> <p>the name of the person so appointed; and</p> <p>the date on which the appointment takes effect.<br/>(Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))</p> | 24 June 2024 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p>                              | 27 May 2024  |

A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.

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; and

the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.

(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

## 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:** SC051513

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

**Registered provider address:** Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall,  
Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

**Responsible individual:** Jennifer Whiston

**Registered manager:** Diane Beckitt

## Inspector

Thirza Smith, Social Care Inspector

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