

SC060034

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A registered charity owns this home, which provides short breaks for up to six children at any one time. The children who use the service have learning disabilities and may also have associated physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
---	-------------

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

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

Date of last inspection: 20 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/07/2021	Full	Good
11/02/2020	Full	Good
12/12/2018	Full	Good
12/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, 23 children were being supported on a rotational basis by this short-break service. Children have excellent experiences and value their short breaks. Children are supported by dedicated staff, who provide individualised care to meet their needs.

The home is well appointed to meet children's leisure interests. The management team has secured substantial investment, which has led to several improvements, including new high-quality play equipment in the garden. A well-resourced sensory room, indoor climbing frame, and indoor swing complement children's additional sensory needs. Creatively themed bedrooms reflect children's imagination. This ensures that there is a nurturing and stimulating environment that meets children's needs and preferences.

Children enjoy an exciting and wide range of activities. Recent trips to forests, beaches, local farms, a circus, and train museums meet children's interests. The staff take advantage of fundraising schemes, which has resulted in one child being able to become a zookeeper for the day. These opportunities greatly enhance children's experiences and give them opportunities that they have not had previously.

Staff are ambitious for children. Children work towards achievable targets that help them to gain independence. Staff help the children to develop these skills using tailored prompting techniques throughout daily activities and self-care routines. Staff celebrate children's milestones and ensure that the development of new skills are matched to children's developmental stages. This personalised support ensures that children make meaningful progress in this area.

Children are engaging well in their education. Staff have effective working relationships with school staff. When issues arise for children, such as when there are delays in education transport, staff have reduced any potential barriers to children's learning and provided the transport.

Staff handle a high volume of medication prescribed for children. Staff follow clear and well-developed medication administration processes. Robust auditing procedures are combined with comprehensive staff medication competency checks. Staff follow regularly updated emergency protocols to support children's health conditions, such as epilepsy and digestive complications, very well. Consequently, children receive well-planned care that safely meets their complex health needs.

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

Parents have unwavering trust and confidence that the staff advocate for their children's best interests, safety and well-being. Staff know children well and provide highly individualised and consistent routines that help children to feel secure.

Staff are well trained in understanding effective safeguarding practice. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities to safeguard the children and are aware of the children's additional vulnerabilities. A newly devised system to monitor low-level concerns is highly effective in capturing proactive actions to further safeguard children.

The strong relationships between staff and children, coupled with staff's successful implementation of behaviour support strategies, mean that disruptive incidents are significantly minimised. The management team's rigorous oversight and in-depth analysis of all incidents have enabled effective identification of triggers to children's anxiety and distress. Staff are well skilled in de-escalation methods. Consequently, no physical interventions have been necessary since the last inspection.

Managers devise excellent-quality activity risk assessments for children. These are detailed, followed by staff, and consider children's individual needs and abilities. This ensures that all children can navigate new experiences that are safe and positive during their short breaks.

Staff and managers meticulously plan to ensure that children are well matched as a group when staying for a short break. This includes working closely with parents and social workers to build a thorough understanding of children's needs. Children receive personalised introductions that are centred around their preferences. Detailed group-compatibility assessments are completed, which support safer matching and friendships between the groups of children who stay.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and qualified. He has strong child-centred values and leads a culture of high aspiration for children, which is reflected by the staff. The manager is supported by a skilled deputy manager. Together, they have overseen several sustained improvements in the quality of care provided to children over the past two years.

Managers have introduced an innovative staff achievement recognition scheme, which has supported a positive team ethos. Recent staff recruitment drives have been successful, and staff turnover has reduced. This period of stability has ensured that children receive consistent care from staff who they know well.

Staff value the management team's commitment and knowledge, and feel well supported. Staff receive regular and constructive supervision sessions, which focus on children's needs. Frameworks for staff appraisals have greatly improved. They

now monitor staff's annual objectives and create ample opportunities for practice reflection and development.

Managers' internal monitoring systems are effective. Records are clear, and improvement areas are promptly identified and actioned. Good-quality external monitoring visits by an independent person support the manager in having a thorough understanding of strengths and areas of development at the home.

Managers and staff are good advocates for children. When children have difficulty accessing other settings, such as school, managers and staff provide additional insight and support alongside other professionals to improve children's experiences.

Managers and staff have very positive relationships with the children's families and social workers. Social workers and families describe children as 'thriving' during their short breaks, and the quality of staff's support as being 'beyond fantastic'.

The staff take advantage of a range of training to meet the individual needs of children. However, important training in supporting alternative communication systems for children has not been provided for staff despite a high number of children requiring the use of communication aids to express their views. One staff member has not achieved a relevant level 3 qualification within the required timescales. Managers are aware of these shortfalls and have plans in place to address them.

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 February 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, they should ensure that staff are offered training in using alternative communication systems with children. ('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: SC060034

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich, Norfolk
NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Daniel Lummis

Registered manager: Peter Willson

Inspector

Mark Anderton, 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