

SC064182

Registered provider: Lodge Group Care UK Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people. The statement of purpose states that the home cares for children and young people who have learning disabilities. The service provides one place for a short break and five long-term placements.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in 2013.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 October 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 15 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2018	Full	Good
08/05/2017	Full	Good
23/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/07/2016	Full	Good

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, that placement planning meetings are held and that staff obtain the children's and young people's local authority care plans.	01/01/2020
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; and manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii))	01/01/2020
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—	01/01/2020

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h)) In particular, that managers monitor and review the quality of records. This relates to records of key-work sessions, support plans, children's 'About Me' documents and body maps.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	01/01/2020

Recommendations

- 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, that staff training is less reliant on online training, and that more face-to-face training is provided.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people receive care that meet their individual needs. They make steady progress from their starting points. Leaders, managers and staff ensure that children or young people new to the home are well matched with existing residents. Therefore, children and young people settle in well following their arrival, as admissions are planned.

Many of the children and young people do not communicate through speech. Staff are skilled in communicating with children and young people who are non-verbal. Staff are familiar and make good use of children's preferred method of communication. Routinely, staff use pictorial cue cards and interpret body language and facial expressions of children and young people to understand their wishes.

Staff use creative methods to offer children a range of choices, such as meals and

leisure activities. Weekly residents' meetings are another way of obtaining children and young people's views.

Managers have amended information about making complaints. This is to improve children and young people's understanding about how they can make complaints. Since the last inspection, the home has received no complaints.

Children and young people enjoy very good relationships with the staff team. The inspector observed children and young people happily playing with staff and having fun. One young person told the inspector that he liked the staff team 'very much'. Parents are appreciative of the attention staff pay to their children. A parent said, 'The staff are amazing. They have provided my son with a safe and secure family environment.'

Children and young people lead healthy lifestyles. Staff ensure that they receive all primary and specialist healthcare services that they need. Their communication with healthcare professionals such as speech and language specialists and occupational therapists is good. Staff's management of children's medication is safe.

Children and young people attend school regularly and have set targets that they are working towards. As a result, their learning outcomes are good. Typically, these goals focus on being with others, communication development and managing their own personal care tasks.

Individual bedrooms have children and young people's artwork and achievement certificates on display. Children and young people enjoy fun and new experiences. For example, this summer they enjoyed a holiday together with staff in Hampshire.

Children and young people develop practical living skills, with the support and supervision of staff. For example, they learn to make snacks, use cutlery appropriately and learn about road safety. This helps them to live their lives more independently.

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

Children are safe at the home and appeared relaxed in the company of staff. Staff protect them from harm, abuse and bullying. There have been no allegations made against staff, no child protection referrals and children and young people do not go missing.

Staff's vigilance and supervision of children and young people are effective. They benefit from staff's knowledge of child protection procedures and their participation in safeguarding training.

Staff have a very good understanding of the impact that children and young people's disabilities have on their behaviour. All staff receive training in de-escalation techniques, and the staff team generally manages children and young people's challenging behaviour well.

There have been several incidents which have included the use of restraint. In these instances, staff have taken appropriate action to protect children, young people and others.

Children benefit from positive handling plans that are clear and provide staff with guidance that helps to curb unacceptable behaviour. Staff use verbal praise and a rewards system with children and young people to encourage positive behaviour.

A social worker said, 'In the year that my child has been living there, there have been no reported incidents of behavioural issues with staff or other children in the home. They (staff) appear to be able to keep him safe and others, unlike when he was living at home.'

Risk assessments identify known and anticipated risks and include strategies that help to reduce children and young people's risks. Staff keep these documents up to date. Behaviour management plans provide staff with good guidance that highlight the triggers for children and young people's behaviours and suggest techniques that help to reduce challenging or risky behaviour.

Managers ensure that the recruitment of staff is safe. This confirms that staff are suitable to work with vulnerable children and young people.

Since the last inspection, the home has undergone a significant programme of refurbishment. The home's previous quiet room no longer exists, and this space has been used to extend one of the lounge areas. This provides greater space for children and young people to safely explore their home environment.

The home's sensory room has been redesigned with creative, new sensory equipment. Staff complete very regular premises checks, and fire prevention practices are sound. There are no health and safety concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The care planning process does not always include the details of placement planning meetings. This is important to ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of placement goals from the outset. In addition, managers do not ensure that placement reviews take place after children and young people have been living at the home for some time. This is to ensure that the placement continues to meet identified needs well, and to review placement progress and issues.

Partnership working with professionals is generally effective. However, managers do not consistently obtain important local authority information. This was found to be the case for one child, where the placing authority had failed to provide the home with a care plan or to attend meetings to meet with managers.

Some case records are poor. In one case file seen, some records of one-to-one discussions and observations were very brief or missing. The child's 'About Me'

document was available in words only despite the child not being able to read. Furthermore, a number of support plans are vague and are not explicit in outlining placement objectives or targets and staff do not consistently complete body maps that highlight children's injuries.

There are significant gaps in the frequency that staff receive supervision, and not all staff appraisals happen every 12 months. Staff training opportunities are adequate. However, this training remains largely in the form of online training. This was highlighted as an area of concern at the previous inspection. The quality of training is not sufficiently wide-ranging, given the complex issues that children and young people present with. This does not help staff to develop relevant knowledge and skills.

The staff team is led by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. Feedback from other professionals about the home's management team is positive. A social worker told the inspector, 'The manager is effective. She leads the staff team well, cares about the children and is always available to speak with me. The service is well run, I think.' A member of staff said of the registered manager, 'She's amazing. She listens, is peaceful and takes on board my suggestions. Because of her, the team is more united, cohesive.'

Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of children. Senior staff are enrolled on level 5 management courses. This is to enhance their managerial skills, so that they can further support the work of the registered manager.

Staff work well with other professionals. This helps them to coordinate and conduct their work thoroughly. A social worker said, 'I'm impressed by the staff team and I know my young person enjoys working with the team. I have no issues with the service at all.'

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: SC064182

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lodge Group Care UK Limited

Registered provider address: 87 High Street, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8JA

Responsible individual: Jeffrey Darnell

Registered manager: Alina Opris

Inspector

Sandra Jacobs-Walls: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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