

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 for up to six children with autism spectrum disorder and/or learning disabilities.

The home was registered with Ofsted in 2005. The manager registered with Ofsted in 2013.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 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: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Good
09/10/2019	Full	Good
15/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their individual starting points. Staff support children with personal targets to help them develop important life skills, such as using the toilet and holding cutlery to eat food independently. One parent said that they feel their child has made significant progress and that their child is safe and cared for in the home.

Children receive good-quality care and enjoy positive experiences living in this home. The facilities include a sensory room, an activity room and a spacious garden for the children to enjoy. However, the activity room is cluttered with storage and had a broken glass frame, which does not make the room safe for children to use. This hazard was immediately acknowledged and promptly removed by staff during the inspection.

Children are supported to access and engage in a wide range of activities, including the 'musicology project', where they have the opportunity to play instruments from all over the world. This activity promotes cultural appreciation and diversity. Children were observed to be enjoying this activity during the inspection. Children are also supported to enjoy activities in the community, including visits to the beach, adventure parks and the local cycling centre.

Children are non-verbal, and staff use various methods of communication to engage with them. This includes using an 'intensive interaction' approach, social stories, pictures and signs. For example, staff present children with different colours for painting activities, and children choose by pointing. This helps staff to understand children's wishes and feelings and meet their needs and gives children autonomy.

Children are treated with kindness and warmth. This was observed throughout the inspection. Children feel comfortable with staff and respond to them well.

Children's health needs are understood and met by staff. Staff are prompt in responding to health needs and support children to attend all of their health appointments. The manager and staff also ensure that children eat nutritious meals to promote good health.

Children are supported to spend time with their families in the home and in the community. They enjoy celebrations together, including birthdays. This supports children to maintain their identity and important family relationships.

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

The manager and staff work closely with parents and social workers to assess and understand children's needs and risks. The manager develops detailed care plans and risk assessments, which help staff meet the needs of children. All children are

closely supervised by one or two staff at all times, which significantly reduces some of the risks to children.

Children are supported with a transition plan before they move into the home. They can visit the home several times before moving in. Children already living in the home are also prepared for new children coming to live with them. This approach is successful and supports children to feel comfortable and settled when they come to live together.

Children receive regular key-work sessions that are individualised to their needs and are enjoyable. Children are helped to practise and develop life skills, such as handwashing and holding cutlery. Staff support children to develop their social skills, including maintaining positive friendships, and to take responsibility for their actions where appropriate. Staff use verbal praise and actions such as clapping and cheering to celebrate children's achievements and positive behaviours.

Staff have a good understanding of children's emotional needs and take appropriate action when incidents occur. They use effective de-escalation techniques and engage children in positive activities to help them feel better. As a result, the use of physical intervention has not been required. Incidents are reviewed and risk assessments are updated. This helps staff reflect on children's behaviours and implement strategies to prevent similar incidents in the future. However, some daily logs do not reflect incidents that took place on the day. This potentially limits the staff team's awareness of any changes in children's behaviours.

Staff know how to respond appropriately to any suspicions of harm or abuse. They have a good understanding of safeguarding and whistle-blowing procedures and know that they can report their concerns to the leaders and manager as well as external safeguarding agencies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An experienced, skilled and effective registered manager manages the home. The manager knows the children well and has a good understanding of their needs and behaviours. The manager promotes child-centred practice in the home. For example, she strongly encourages staff to practise a specific model, 'intensive interaction', with children, which children respond to well. This supports children to enjoy socialising with other people, make connections and feel seen and heard.

The manager ensures that there is a sufficient number of staff to support children, based on their needs and risks. This ensures that children receive good-quality care and support, which ensures that they have good experiences and achieve positive outcomes.

Staff receive regular supervision that focuses on child-related practice as well as staff training and development. Staff's performance and practice are appraised annually. This ensures that the manager has good oversight of staff practice and development.

Team meetings take place regularly and they are effective. The manager and staff discuss relevant topics, such as the children's needs, the 'intensive interaction' practice and safeguarding. This supports good practice and the protection of children. Staff are given recognition for good practice, which demonstrates value and respect for staff.

The manager and staff work closely with children's parents and professional networks. This helps the people supporting children to continuously identify and support children's developing needs. Consequently, children receive holistic care and support from the staff team. Social workers have praised the manager and staff for the level of care and support they provide to children and their families.

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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that the activity room is organised and safe, and that sharp objects are removed to prevent risk to children.	8 December 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, daily logs should reflect incidents that occur. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 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: John Timbs

Registered manager: Alina Opris

Inspector

Amena Begum, Social Care Inspector

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