

SC065730

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides short breaks for up to ten children with sensory impairment and/or learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

Six children were receiving a short break at the time of the inspection.

The home is led by a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 January 2025

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: 12 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/12/2023	Full	Good
22/02/2023	Full	Good
17/01/2022	Full	Good
30/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have fun at this home. Staff know the children well and have strong relationships with them. Staff say they love caring for the children and this is clear in their interactions with each child. New experiences are created for children. For example, a child enjoyed their first trip to the seaside. One family member said, 'The service is so amazing, we are only human and sometimes we need a break but also want our child to be safe and happy. It is helping us, our son and his siblings.'

Staff know the specific way that each child communicates. If a child is non-speaking, symbols, pictures, Makaton and electronic devices are used to help them make choices. Children are helped to understand what is happening then and what is next. One of the carers is a 'communication influencer' who champions ways that carers can gain children's wishes and feelings.

Care plans describe the needs of the children well. They address the level of help and support the child needs. This includes managing complex behaviours and health needs. The likes and dislikes of each child are clearly included. However, some areas of care plans would benefit from further exploration and clarification. For example, understanding the child's culture and identity and how that may affect the care provided.

Staff support children with their education. There is good communication between school and home staff. There are well established systems in place to ensure a smooth transition for children arriving from and leaving the home for school. If a child does not have a school, staff work closely with other professionals to identify alternative provisions. As a result, children are supported to learn in a way that meets their specific needs.

Children's health is managed well by the staff. There is specific training for carers with regards to understanding and meeting more complex health needs. Where required, health professionals will support within the home. This ensures that children receive the appropriate level of care to make their short stays enjoyable and safe.

There is a clear focus on children's stays being fun and child focused. Any goals or aims being worked towards are age appropriate and manageable for the child. Targets at the home are in line with targets children have at school. This ensures a consistent approach to understanding and caring for each child.

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

Risk assessments are built into children's care plans. They are specific to each child and include known and potential risks. Clear and practical advice is given to staff on how to recognise the risk and how to manage risks to keep a child safe. The allocated key worker for the child keeps the assessment updated. The manager and deputies audit the

plans. This ensures that staff understand risks that affect individual children with complex additional needs.

Children's behaviour that is difficult to manage is responded to well by staff. Physical intervention is rarely used and is as a last resort and minimal. Recording of incidents is good, with management oversight and required actions identified. A deputy has become a trainer in physical intervention. This enables quicker access to training and advice in this area moving forward. However, on two occasions the identified approach to managing a child's behaviour was not followed. When practice is not in line with agreed plans this is taken seriously and fully explored. This is in partnership with the complex behaviour service and social workers.

Staff respond well to children who display self-injurious behaviours. Risk assessments describe control measures and what to do if the measures do not work. A clear focus has been made on creating a sensory environment across the home. As a result, children have choices of areas of the home they enjoy when they are upset or anxious.

Children are helped to keep safe if an emergency evacuation of the home is required. Staff have specific actions to follow for each child. This is in line with their understanding and abilities. The manager has worked with the local authority fire safety manager. A new approach to fire evacuations has been created that better suits the needs of the children. Safe refuge points enable children to stay in the building unless there is a real need to evacuate.

Staff use monitors in bedrooms appropriately where there are concerns for a child, such as a risk of seizures. This is clearly recorded in the child's care plan and agreed with parents. However, an additional hallway monitor has not always been used as intended. It is not clearly explained in the care plan or consent form.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has ensured that the requirement and recommendation from the previous inspection have been met.

Staff speak highly of the manager and deputy managers. They feel well supported and listened to. They can go to the manager with any concerns. One staff member said, 'The management are absolutely fantastic.'

The manager ensures that new staff receive a thorough induction to the home. Staff are guided through a booklet that helps them to understand the work and expectations. This is supported by a comprehensive training schedule. It includes training specific to children with complex health needs and learning disabilities. Staff are qualified or are working towards an apprenticeship qualification. A creative training passport is used in the induction and in supervisions for reflection on learning.

Staff receive one-to-one supervision sessions with the manager, deputy manager or appropriate senior. They are held regularly. Staff feel they are a safe and effective space

for discussion. Supervision notes, whilst sometimes brief, evidence discussion about children and set out clear actions for staff to follow.

Monthly team meetings are held by the manager. Staff feel that their voices are heard in these meetings. A recent decision has been made to split meetings. One covers operational issues and work practice. The other has created a valued space for staff to further explore and understand children's needs. It allows time to plan effectively for a child's stay at the home.

The manager feels very well supported by the responsible individual who visits the home weekly. He holds regular supervision sessions with the manager. This allows time to reflect on the development of the staff and home and any incidents. The manager also feels well supported by her deputy managers and the manager of the children with disabilities social work team.

Comprehensive auditing and monitoring procedures are used by the manager. This includes care plans and medication audits. The manager and deputy managers value spending time with children and observing staff practice. As a result, the manager knows the quality of the care and protection of children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirement

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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically refers to the use of an additional hallway monitor.	28 February 2025

Recommendations

- Care which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm to themselves or others. Staff should know the agreed strategies of behaviour management and only use these strategies in their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

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: SC065730

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Registered provider address: The Council house, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FS

Responsible individual: Andrew Kaiser

Registered manager: Samantha Watts

Inspectors

Shaun Caplis, Social Care Inspector

Louise Copping, Social Care Inspector

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