

SC067753

Registered provider: West Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and support for a maximum of 10 children with physical and learning disabilities. The home provides permanent placements and short breaks for children. At the time of this inspection, 7 children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 May 2026

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	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2025	Full	Good
16/07/2024	Full	Good
03/01/2024	Full	Good
31/01/2023	Full	Outstanding

Summary of findings

Children experience warm, nurturing care and make good progress, supported by strong relationships between staff, families and professionals. Their health, education and social development are well promoted. Children have personalised bedrooms and are given meaningful opportunities to express their views. However, safeguarding requires improvement, due to medication errors and unclear recording of incident outcomes. Leadership and management also require improvement; oversight is inconsistent, information is fragmented and staff supervision is weak, contributing to low morale. Despite this, partnership working is strong and diversity is well celebrated.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from warm, nurturing care from staff who are committed to their wellbeing. As a result, children flourish. They develop trusting relationships with staff, and effective partnership working by staff with parents and professionals strengthens the support they receive. For example, close collaboration with one child's parents has improved the child's overall health, ensuring appointments are attended and supported. Children access specialist services, including orthodontists and optometrists, who adapt their practice to meet individual needs.

Children make good progress across all areas of their lives. Staff understand their health needs and work proactively to support them. Education is well supported, strengthened by positive relationships with schools and alternative providers. Children enjoy opportunities that enhance their social development, including community events such as an autism awareness walk and a recent trip to Spain. The diverse staff team enriches children's experiences.

Children's bedrooms are personalised and reflect their individuality. They enjoy time alone or with other children in the home's communal areas, which encourage social interaction. Staff prioritise the voice of the child; children make choices about their environment and have regular opportunities to express their views, including through house meetings. Social stories help children understand and participate in decision-making.

Children's moves into and out of the home are well planned. Staff are committed to ensuring children have positive experiences of transitions. One child preparing to move on is fully involved, and staff are working closely with the new provider to ensure a smooth move.

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

Children are not always kept safe from harm. The staff have made some medication errors which have placed children at risk. On one occasion, a child was at risk of seizures because of the late administration of their medication. Medication records are poorly completed, with information missing. As a result, the standard of management and administration of medication is below an acceptable level.

Staff receive training relevant to children's needs, including behaviour management, understanding behaviour and medication administration. They have a good understanding of the need for boundaries and work to ensure consistency in this area. The children respond well to this consistency of practice. This provides them with a sense of continuity and stability. There is a core team around one child in particular, who benefits from this level of predictability and support.

Safeguarding arrangements are in place and incidents are appropriately notified. However, records do not reflect the outcome of investigations, and the manager is not clear about the outcomes and where to find them. The manager recognised that in relation to one incident, there should have been a further update to ensure clarity about the latest situation.

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

Leaders and managers do not operate effective systems to support the home's continued development. Information is inconsistent and stored in multiple places, making it difficult for staff to locate what they need. Some staff are unsure where key documents are kept. Staff supervision is weak; one senior member of staff does not receive regular supervision, and records show limited reflection or discussion of practice.

Staff value the specialist face-to-face training they receive, which helps prepare them for the complex work they undertake. However, morale has been low, and some staff report feeling undervalued. Although the manager has completed a quality of care review, oversight has been inconsistent. The manager was not fully aware of some important information, and finding relevant documents during the inspection was problematic at times. Children's files also vary in quality, and some have information missing.

The manager understands the home's strengths and areas for improvement. However, he has not sought feedback from staff or external professionals when reviewing the quality of care. He has also not challenged the independent visitor when their reports contain inaccuracies. Such as, details of medication errors that have occurred. The manager did not identify this oversight.

Professional relationships are strong, and the manager plays a central role in maintaining them. Effective partnership working ensures that children and families feel valued and respected. The manager and staff promote inclusion and celebrate diversity through a range of activities that keep these values central to the culture of the home.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a) (2)(a)(i))	30 July 2026
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(h))	30 July 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	30 July 2026

that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(c))	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b))	30 July 2026
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	30 July 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that reviews of the quality of children's care include the views of children, parents, staff and professionals from children's placing local authorities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should be visible and accessible to staff and able to fulfil their leadership and/or management responsibilities. In particular, communication with staff should be effective, to enable them to feel valued. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7)

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: SC067753

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: West Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RG

Responsible individual: Hayley Grover

Registered manager: Luke Stevens

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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