

SC361789

Registered provider: Cornwall Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It is registered to provide short breaks for up to five children with disabilities and associated needs. It is situated near a school for children with additional needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2024.

Staff in the home are referred to as adults. This is reflected in the report.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 December 2024

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: 29 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2023	Full	Good
20/03/2023	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Full	Good
03/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home is spacious and warm. New hoists have been installed, meaning more children can enjoy bathtime. Photo tiles of the children around the home are an excellent way for children to see themselves and the memories they have made here. There is an additional benefit as children can move the photos around and take them with them. Adults and children can also use the photos to help to communicate with each other.

Nearly all children are receiving their assessed number of stays, with some children being offered more. This is much higher than the previous inspection. More adults have been recruited, which has meant that more children have been offered stays. A small number of breaks had to be cancelled due to an emergency placement for a child. However, this was limited.

Adults know how to communicate with the children and a variety of communication aids are available, which help to meet children's individual needs. Children are given lots of time to get to know the adults and vice versa before they stay overnight. Children's personal communication books are consistently available to them, with lots of opportunities for picture exchange for the children that use this method. Each child's bedding and personal items are displayed when they stay. Efforts have been made by the adults to decorate the bedrooms to make them more homely, in line with the children's individual needs. Beds for children are far more comfortable, with all mattresses being upgraded, except one which was on order. The sensory and soft playrooms are more accessible to children who wish to use them.

Children have fun-filled stays, particularly in school holidays when they enjoy trips to local attractions such as surf schools and cinemas. There is a high level of screen time for some children, which does not provide them with a great variety of experiences and stimulation.

During the inspection, one child was engaging with a craft activity and was supported by the adults to make choices. The adults' responses to the child were nurturing and warm, with the child seeking and receiving affection from the adults, demonstrating the close relationships that exist between them.

Children are not offered a wide variety of home-cooked, nutritious food. Some children have limited diets, but the modelling of balanced menu choices, aromas of enticing food and sitting together for mealtimes is lacking.

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

Children are kept safe during their stays here. Any safeguarding concerns are recorded and managed well. Incidents are reported quickly by the adults to other professionals and advice is sought from children's social workers and other professionals that know them well.

Physical interventions have been used on two occasions since the last inspection. One of these incidents did not include a full description of the intervention used. Learning from this meant that the way adults recorded interventions was changed. As a result, the second incident was much clearer to understand. Reflection from the adults focused on what may be going on for children, and adults are curious for them. A good relationship between the adults and one child's parent helped adults to understand the child's behaviour better. On both occasions, conversations with the children afterwards took place by the adult involved in the incident. Management oversight did not analyse the appropriateness or not of this. Learning was shared with the team about improving relationships with children.

Safeguarding referrals are made quickly, and adults follow the formal process. When adults have been unsure about processes, additional support has been put into place for them. Children's risk assessments are updated, and calls are made to parents or carers the day before stays to ensure that any changes are known about before children arrive.

Medication is routinely audited. One recording error led to learning in respect of adults receiving emails when on leave. There was no impact on the child and this learning was shared amongst the team.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home now benefits from having a registered manager and recruitment of additional adults has been successful. This has meant more children can have their assessed number of stays and some have had more. Adults that work in the home say they feel supported and more settled with the changes that have happened in the wider service.

The manager has good systems in place for reviewing care and tracking incidents. There is also clear oversight on all significant incidents, with managers reviewing these. Records are clear and children's plans give adults good guidance on what to do and how to support each child. At times, these plans are written in the first person, which is not accurate and can be confusing.

Supervision takes place regularly and actions are set and reviewed. Children's needs are discussed both in team meetings and individually with adults where there is a need. Team meetings provide good opportunities to consider individual children and how stays can be organised and improved.

External scrutiny is provided through monthly visits from the independent visitor. There has been some challenge from senior leaders regarding the lack of observation of children and feedback from people outside of the home, which is helping to drive improvement.

External feedback is overwhelming positive and describes the enjoyment the children experience. A parent gave high praise for adults listening to their views and professionals spoke of good communication and close working with the team.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(a)(iv)) In particular, this means that the registered person should ensure that children are provided with nutritious meals suitable for each child's needs. Where appropriate, children should be involved in choosing and preparing meals, and opportunities to sit together and eat should be promoted.	31 January 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, the registered person should carefully consider the appropriateness of recording the child's information using first-

person narrative when not using the child's actual words. ('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: SC361789

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cornwall Council

Registered provider address: Accounts Payable, PO Box 727, Truro, TR1 9GP

Responsible individual: Sharron Adams

Registered manager: Samantha Hoskin

Inspector

Nickie Doney, Social Care Inspector

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