

SC361789

Registered provider: Cornwall Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to five children who may experience emotional or social difficulties or have learning disabilities. This is a short-stay provision, for short breaks. There were three children accessing the service at the time of the inspection.

There is a registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 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: 11 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2024	Full	Good
29/11/2023	Full	Good
20/03/2023	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector spent time with the three children who were accessing the service during the inspection. One child was being supported to spend time in the sensory room, including having fun with a range of musical instruments and enjoying stimulation from an electronic light show. Two children were being supported to take part in painting and colouring. There was a vast choice of colours, paints, pens and activity sheets, as well as plain paper for the children to use. All the children were given choices, encouraged and celebrated throughout the activities. Children are provided with varied and nutritious meals.

Staff are in tune with the children's needs. Staff care for the children and enjoy spending time with them. They know how each child communicates and provide consistent support to promote these methods so that children can participate fully in their activities. Staff provide positive experiences for them.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. Staff see the children as the individuals that they are. They care for them to develop a positive self-view and to increase their self-esteem. There are no limitations. Children go swimming, and enjoy trips out and surfing, and this increases their confidence. Achievements are celebrated.

Children who stay at the home have compatibility assessments which are used to understand if staff have the skills to meet the children's needs and their needs are in line with the home's statement of purpose. Managers talked about how they choose which children will spend time together in the home, however, there are not any documents setting out how and why they choose certain children to spend time with others, the possible impact of those decisions and why they have been made.

Children's personal care plans are written from a strengths-based perspective, about what they can do. Plans are positive and child focused; there is a clear ethos of planning for what children can do rather than planning around what may limit them. While most documents are clear and consistent, some documents are not clear and use ambiguous language. This prevents staff from having important clarity about how to fully meet children's needs.

Before children stay at the home, work is done with them, their families and involved professionals to learn about the home and what the children will experience. The home ensures open communication, which supports positive experiences of the home. When children are no longer able to access the home due to their age, the home works with families and professionals to support the children with positive transitions to any new care provider.

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

Children have individual and up-to-date risk assessments that highlight their known vulnerabilities and set out what action staff should take to manage the risks. The plans in place are followed by staff when there are incidents, which reduces possible harm.

Restrictive practice is used in the home. For one child, there are side bed risers in place and visual monitoring is used. There is a risk assessment in relation to these restrictions. The plans set out how the restriction and monitoring should be used and why they are in place. It is clear from plans that when children are having their liberty restricted their dignity and privacy should be maintained as much as possible. There has been one incident of physical restraint. The incident was recorded and reviewed by managers. The views of the child and staff involved were sought after the incident.

Any external concerns about care provided are clearly recorded. Complaints or concerns are dealt with in a timely way; there is an acknowledgement of any shortfall in practice and there is a transparent response from staff to those who raised the concern.

When accidents happen involving staff or children, accident forms are completed which include clear details. All records are signed off by managers and when children are involved, parents are informed.

Investigations into allegations are well managed and any possible instigator of harm is fully considered. For example, by members of staff or parents are shared with the appropriate agencies and are handled fairly, quickly and in accordance with statutory guidance. Children are supported and protected. Support is given both to the person making the allegation and the person who is the subject of the allegation. Outcomes are shared in a timely way.

The staff and managers have developed effective links with the local authority designated officers and other important safeguarding agencies. Communication about safeguarding issues is effective. Staff are actively involved in any safeguarding teams around the child. They keep consistent records as part of their role in the multi-agency team to impact the well-being and safety of the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is an experienced registered manager in post. There is a mix of established and new staff, who work well together.

Managers use learning from practice and feedback, including the views of parents and professionals, to improve the experiences of children. The manager can identify the home's strengths and areas for improvement and implements clear development plans that continually improve the experiences of children.

Managers and staff work proactively and positively with parents and external professionals. and have built effective working relationships with them. Feedback

received is overwhelmingly positive and complimentary about the home. Managers ensure they provide positive experiences for children and their parents. The manager does this by having effective oversight of the home.

Staff work collaboratively to provide consistency and stability. There are clear responsibilities and accountabilities, which give staff a sense of shared ownership of their practice. Leaders and managers give staff responsibility and autonomy, which has empowered them. Staff are invested in the work they do, which has had a positive impact on children. Staff say they are well led and managed. The staff are happy working at the home. They feel part of a team, enjoy their work and all prioritise a strong focus on positive experiences for children and ensuring that all children are safeguarded.

The home has senior management meetings monthly to ensure all areas of concern are addressed and messages are being effectively passed down to staff. Whole staff team meetings are consistent and well attended, and discuss practice matters, practical matters in the home and the children.

Supervision is regular and effective. It focuses on the child's needs, how staff are meeting them and staff development, and is recorded effectively. The clear focus on safeguarding and the scenarios used as a tool for reflection encourage staff to think about safeguarding in a wider context.

The manager has not completed a review of the quality of care in a timely way, in line with the children's home regulations. Audits are carried out relating to all aspects of the home, however senior managers do not always have oversight of these and any required areas for management development.

There has been one notification under regulation 40 of a serious event since the last inspection. The notification was not provided to Ofsted in a timely way after the incident and did not include all the details required regulation.

Safer recruitment practice is in place, however, in this inspection period, a member of staff has worked without a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in place. A risk assessment was completed; however, it did not adequately help to mitigate the risks of the lack of a valid police check being completed. A no lone working agreement was not included in the risk assessment.

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
(4) The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— (a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; (b) an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; (d) a child protection enquiry involving a child — (i) is instigated; or (ii) concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or (e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (5) A notification made under this regulation— (a) must include details of— (i) the matter; (ii) the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and (iii) any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; (b) must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	28 July 2025

The registered person must ensure they complete regulation 40 notifications in a timely way after any notifiable matter and ensure the notification includes clear details of the matter, the people involved and action taken.	
(1) The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. (2) In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— (a) the quality of care provided for children; (b) the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and (c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (3) After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). (4) The registered person must— (a) supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and (b) make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b)) The registered person must ensure they complete a review of the quality of care, which includes opinions of those in the home and feedback from others. In addition, the registered person must ensure it is completed at least once every six months and a copy sent to HMCI within 28 days of completion.	18 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the needs of the children who live in the home are fully considered before admitting a new child. In addition, they should ensure there is a full evaluation of all the children's needs in relation to one another before short-break stays together. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them and include robust risk assessments in the absence of a DBS certificate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the language used to record incidents is non-judgemental about the child and is careful and objective. ('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: Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY

Responsible individual: Sharron Adams

Registered manager: Samantha Hoskin

Inspector

Hannah Spencer-Townesend, 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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