

SC373941

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children who are experiencing complex life and developmental challenges.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in May 2016.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 August 2018

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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/06/2017	Full	Good
12/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/07/2016	Full	Good
04/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- There may be circumstances where a child can be prevented from leaving a home. Any such measure of restraint must be proportionate and in place for no longer than is necessary to manage the immediate risk. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.52)

In particular, ensure that detailed risk assessments are in place and that there is an immediate risk so that such a measure is necessary to prevent serious harm.

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

In particular, ensure that the assessment specifically demonstrates how the risks associated with the child's behaviour will be effectively managed to meet their needs.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have created a stable and safe home where children can settle, grow and develop. In a homely environment, staff provide the children with nurturing, playful care alongside appropriate boundaries. Their insightful understanding of children's needs helps children to enjoy excellent relationships with them. Children have a secure base from which they can safely explore their wishes and feelings, knowing that staff will respond.

Staff celebrate and take pride in children's achievements and progress, giving them increased self-esteem, confidence and the resilience to move forward to young adulthood. Extending children's experiences and giving them opportunities to have fun is a high priority for staff.

Staff are ambitious for children to succeed in education. When children find school challenging, staff provide close support and communicate effectively with school staff. Managers are strong advocates for children, ensuring that external professionals appreciate children's specific educational needs and that children have opportunities to succeed and fulfil their potential.

Children's views are important to staff. Staff value their opinions and respond to their ideas and suggestions. Children are involved in the recruitment of new staff. Applicants are interviewed by a panel of children and young people. Feedback from this panel is genuinely influential in recruitment decisions.

Structured plans help children to develop independence skills. Staff support them at a pace and level that develop their confidence and which are appropriate to their individual needs.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of children's specific needs. They are aware of the risks associated with each child's behaviour and they implement supportive and protective measures. With the valuable, weekly assistance of a psychotherapist from the looked after children and adolescent mental health services (LAC CAMHS), staff are continually considering the meaning of children's behaviour. They provide sensitive and emotionally comforting responses appropriate to the children's experiences of trauma and attachment difficulties. Children are gradually learning how to manage their anxieties, worries and behaviour.

Risk assessments are detailed and reviewed frequently. They provide staff with detailed guidance to support children's safety. Individualised plans are structured and appropriate to children's current development needs.

There are occasions when some children leave the home without permission, often for short periods of time. Staff respond effectively and apply agreed procedures. There have been occasions when staff have locked the external doors to prevent children from leaving the home when they have considered the child to be at risk of harm. These incidents have been appropriately recorded and monitored by the registered manager. Risk assessments for the use of this measure are not in place.

The registered manager assesses the compatibility of new children with the existing group of children living at the home. Some of these assessments do not specifically demonstrate how the risks associated with a child's behaviour will be effectively managed to meet their needs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is passionate about providing high-quality care for the children and helping them to achieve the best outcomes. He knows the children very well and gives them a sense of belonging to a warm and nurturing home where, as a social worker commented, the child 'is not only supported but cherished'. The staff share this commitment to the children through their therapeutic parenting approach, despite the challenges that they face in meeting the children's complex needs.

Training for the staff is carefully selected to enhance their skills and develop the therapeutic parenting approach, which is now demonstrably embedded in their practice. Regular attendance by a LAC CAMHS psychotherapist at weekly staff meetings supports the staff in reflecting on their practice and implementing individualised strategies to meet children's needs.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision. Staff feel supported, are able to put forward ideas to improve the quality of care and feel valued.

The management team works very effectively with external professionals to create a team around the child that communicates and works together in the best interest of the child. Managers are aware of complex family dynamics, and support children's contact with their families with sensitivity and compassion.

Continuous improvement is a constant focus. Rigorous internal and external monitoring ensures that high standards are maintained. The registered manager also considers wider policy issues to drive improvement. He has recently amended the recruitment strategy for new staff, with a sharper focus on the values of applicants, their personal motivation and emotional resilience.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC373941

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex
BN7 1UE

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Rugg

Registered manager: Ian Williams

Inspector

Jan Hunnam: 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
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