

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: 11 to 12 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2018	Full	Good
01/06/2017	Full	Good
12/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/07/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff build and sustain excellent relationships with children. Children have made measurable progress in differing ways, since living in this home. Children who have experienced high levels of childhood disruption are provided with stability, safety and security. Children refer to staff as being their family; this indicates their sense of belonging.

Staff are resilient and responsive, demonstrating their in-depth understanding of developmental trauma. The special touches intensify the level of nurture that staff provide. For example, children receive one-to-one attention and care to settle at night. This helps the children to feel comforted and safe. This therapeutic-based approach is rooted in care practice.

Integral to the team is the child and adolescent psychotherapist. The team values her insight and support. There is a constant focus on developing and enhancing the team's therapeutic parenting skills, which is supported by progressive training. Weekly consultations inform child-centred practice. This enables staff to respond sensitively and thoughtfully to the children's complex and varied needs.

Children who experience significant barriers which prevent them from engaging in education are encouraged and incentivised to attend. Excellent relationships with the virtual school and education provisions enable creative and thoughtful education packages to be delivered. The focus includes social development in addition to academic progress. The effectiveness of the packages on children's advancement is closely reviewed. Staff often think outside the box, to explore new ideas to re-engage children, when required. This results in children making good progress and being able to set sights on their future career paths.

Staff create a family home. Personal touches such as vases with fresh flowers, together with the attractive decor and soft furnishings, enhance the warm and homely feel. Photographs capture happy memories and experiences. The hub of the home is the kitchen, where staff provide varied and healthy home-cooked meals, along with delicious home-baked delights.

Children have an established long-term relationship with the visiting advocate. They have regular opportunities to share their views and discuss the things that are important to them. Their ideas are valued, and contribute to their care planning. This informs activities, holiday choices, some which are abroad, menus, and plans to enhance the home.

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

Risk management practice is of an admirable quality. Staff show a highly developed understanding of the specific risks faced by the children in their care. Children are

helped to understand how to keep themselves safe and make informed choices. Staff work closely with specialist services. This results in risk being well managed and understood, with some children significantly reducing risk-taking behaviours. Children say they feel safe, well cared for, and able to seek a high level of support. Professionals confirm their trust in staff to safeguard the children.

Admission processes are strong. Each child is carefully assessed to consider the likely impact of their admission on the group of children. Clear management strategies help minimise and set out how staff will respond to risk. The arrangements to introduce children and their families to the home are impressive. One child's plan involved meeting each staff member, and having a one-to-one session to enable them to choose an item of their choice to personalise their bedroom. The introduction culminated in a trip to Thorpe Park. This enabled the children to get to know each other, before the child moved in.

Staff engage children in meaningful and interesting activities, such as golfing and husky walking. These opportunities help children develop social awareness, interests and independence. This has significantly increased their confidence and self-esteem. Children who experience high levels of anxiety have become more self-assured in accessing the community, enriching their social experiences.

Children are guided to develop the necessary skills as they approach adulthood. This guidance includes both practical skills and the emotional support they require in preparation for moving on. Outreach packages and the emphasis on informal ongoing support are appreciated and valued by young people who now live independently.

Staff recognise the significance and complexity of family relationships. Staff are sensitive and incredibly supportive. They assist the children to explore, develop and sustain these relationships. Professionals are highly complimentary about the efforts of staff, who establish meaningful relationships with families for the benefit of children.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted. A combination of diet, exercise and well-being ensures that children's health needs are met. Close links with specialist services afford children access to a range of health professionals, appropriate to their changing needs. These include therapy, sexual health and smoking cessation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The staff team is led by an experienced and caring registered manager. His commitment to his own development has enhanced his understanding of the children's needs, and enabled him to improve his own practice. This has contributed further to the strength of his leadership and management skills, with a positive impact on delivering an outstanding level of quality care.

The manager and his deputy have a shared vision for the team. Together, they provide excellent supervision and guidance to staff. They recognise the emotional stresses staff face and provide a high level of nurture and support, which greatly enhances the team's

performance. Staff speak approvingly about the quality of the support and training offered. They feel their work is valued and appreciated. This is affirmed by the level of praise the manager has for his staff.

Leaders and managers endeavour to provide the best care. The primary focus is providing children with a stable and secure base, where they can explore their childhood experiences. In terms of striving for continuous improvement, improving children's experiences is central to development plans.

The established team is supported by regular relief staff. This provides the consistency that children need to begin to place trust in adults. The manager understands the importance of these relationships. This has informed development work which has improved staff recruitment processes, as well as retention and development opportunities for staff. As a result, the staff team has remained constant.

Management monitoring is established. This includes external analyses and evaluation of the service by the independent visitor. Actions identified through these processes drives the home's development. Records are maintained to the highest standard, highlighting strengths in care planning and the ability to capture the children's journeys.

The home has a clear ethos, in line with the home's statement of purpose. Leaders and managers and the staff are committed to this shared philosophy. Maintaining excellent communication and close relationships with professionals is central to this ethos. This maximises effective use of resources to meet the children's needs.

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 differences 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: 175b Priory Road, Hastings, Sussex TN34 3JD

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Rugg

Registered manager: Ian Williams

Inspector

Joe Davys, social care inspector

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