

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. Up to four children live in the home, with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2022.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2022

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: 25 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/05/2021	Full	Good
11/06/2019	Full	Outstanding
01/08/2018	Full	Good
01/06/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, four children were living in the home.

Staff offer children an appropriate level of affection and praise. This helps children to develop positive relationships with the staff.

Staff help children to contribute their views about their care. Although this may not change their plans, it does help children to feel valued and to be assured that their views matter.

Staff prioritise children's education. Staff are mindful that children have often experienced disruption to their education. Consequently, staff move quickly to remove all barriers that can impact a child's school attendance and ability to engage in learning.

Children participate in local clubs and groups and go on holidays of their choice. Staff are committed to helping children to pursue hobbies and interests, such as football and beachcombing.

Staff work with health professionals to ensure that children have access to the right support and advice in relation to their physical and emotional health. Children learn how to make healthy choices, including trying new foods and exercising. Some children are attending routine appointments for the first time thanks to the dedicated support of the staff.

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

Staff are acutely aware of the children's vulnerabilities and their responsibility for protecting every child. Trusting relationships with staff are at the heart of safeguarding practice.

When children go missing from the home, staff take prompt action. Staff follow children's missing-from-care protocols and work closely with the police. This coordinated approach helps to keep children safe. However, records made by staff to capture the action taken are sometimes confusing due to duplication across different forms.

Joint working with health professionals means that children with a history of self-injurious behaviour receive a consistent response when they are likely to self-harm. Plans are clear and effective in supporting children to use agreed coping mechanisms when they are struggling emotionally.

Staff have a good understanding of de-escalation techniques that help them to manage challenging behaviours. Consequently, physical intervention is rarely used.

The home requires redecoration and attention to detail with regards to repairs. Some of the fixtures and fittings are institutional. There are plans in place to improve the décor, but there is a lack of urgency from the wider authority. The failure to address this shortfall compromises staff's efforts in trying to achieve a homely environment for the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is ambitious and passionate about providing a good quality of care to the children. They work closely with professionals, and feedback is positive. These partnerships mean that children are protected, feel secure and know that everyone has their best interests at heart.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervisions and annual appraisals. These sessions help to support and challenge staff practice and improve the care given to the children. This is further supported by reflective team meetings, with the children being central to the discussions and agreed actions.

Children's care plans are regularly reviewed and updated in line with their changing needs. Children benefit from one-to-one sessions, particularly when a new concern or issue is noted. However, the quality of record-keeping is variable. For example, there is a lack of evidence to show that one-to-one sessions help to support children to develop their life skills. The manager is aware of the issue and this is to be embedded in practice. Furthermore, risk assessments are not always clear and can be repetitive, which leads to confusion.

Partnership working is well established. This multi-agency approach ensures that appropriate support is in place to assist children's progress and to maximise each child's potential.

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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d))	31 December 2022
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(a)(h)) Specifically, monitor the quality of records to ensure that they are clear and not repetitive or confusing.	31 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. Children's homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. This includes ensuring that the bathrooms have domestic style showers and that the hallway is in an acceptable state of repair and decoration. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC373941

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

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

Responsible individual: Kathy Marriott

Registered manager: Georgia Carty

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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