

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 and provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2025.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 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: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Good
03/01/2024	Full	Good
19/10/2022	Full	Good
25/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care and support from the warm and responsive staff at the home. The staff work in a child-centred way. They provide care specific to the individual needs of the children and the children make good progress as a result. This includes a reduction in emotional incidents for one child, while another child has completed GCSEs, which they had previously refused to take. This child is now attending college.

There are positive relationships between all adults involved with the care of the children, including external professionals, as they all focus on supporting the children's progress.

The staff work to ensure that children have a sense of stability and belonging. The children trust the staff and feel able to raise any concerns with them. The children's bedrooms are personalised and reflect their characters. The staff offer activities that help the children to feel part of the home; they value their views and wishes. The staff supported one child to attend the local authority annual child in care awards. They ensured that the child felt suitably dressed, helping them to feel special and part of the event.

Staff are strongly committed to the education of the children. They work with a range of professionals to ensure that the children receive the most appropriate education. One child does not have a school place. The manager and staff have worked to ensure that this child's education needs remain the highest priority. While they seek a school place, this child accesses alternative education. The staff also provide educational opportunities that help to maintain the child's interest.

Children have access to therapeutic input as required. The staff work with health professionals to ensure that the children's health needs are met, and that specialist interventions happen when necessary. These include assessments regarding attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism. The staff recognise the importance of these assessments and the positive impact that these interventions can have on a child's future.

The staff provide the children with a range of opportunities to express their views, wishes and feelings. They meet with children individually to gather their views for their review meetings, particularly when the child does not wish to attend. One external professional was positive about this process, feeling that they were able to hear the views of the child, despite the child not being at the review.

Family time is well supported. The staff recognise the value of children having time with family and other people who are important to them.

Children have good day-to-day experiences and go on holidays, which they enjoy. The staff ensure that they have access to activities such as fishing, swimming, horse-riding, cinema and theatre trips.

There is good planning for children to move into and out of the home. Compatibility assessments are of a good standard.

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

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children. They understand the risks that the children face, and their vulnerabilities. Risk assessments are of good quality, and they are frequently reviewed. Children are generally safe. One child said that they felt safe, despite one incident of an inappropriate comment from another child. The staff managed this effectively.

There are good processes in place to respond to children who go missing. The staff are clear about the missing-from-home protocols and work with a range of professionals to ensure the child's safe return. Children receive return home discussions with their social worker. When this does not happen, the manager escalates their concern about this to senior managers. Staff have a good understanding of child sexual exploitation and self-harm and have received training in these areas.

Staff understand that children need to have boundaries and structure. The staff manage children's behaviours well. They receive specialist training to manage behaviours that challenge them, using a therapeutic approach. This is evident in the interactions between the staff and the children. Children feel cared for and valued.

Safeguarding arrangements to protect children are good. The staff work with the children on keeping themselves safe, generally and online. The children recognise the importance of this. Staff know what to do when a child makes an allegation about another member of staff. The manager and staff work effectively with a range of agencies to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have clear aspirations for the children and ensure high standards of individualised care. There is a strong commitment to meeting the needs of the children and to ensuring that they have opportunities to achieve.

Leaders and managers have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They are not afraid to tackle difficult subjects with the children; they care and they are non-judgemental. Staffing issues have also been managed well.

Good processes are in place to track the progress that children make. The use of a reward system is a positive way of supporting the achievements of the children.

The manager provides a supportive environment for staff as well as children. The stability of the staff group is testament to how supported they feel. Staff receive regular, reflective supervision and speak positively about this. However, in some cases, the name of the supervisee, the time supervision started and the duration are not included in records. Additionally, safeguarding is not always discussed at these sessions. This is a missed opportunity for the supervisor to reassure themselves of the staff member's understanding of these important matters. Staff have not received an annual review of their practice for some time.

Good relationships with external professionals enable the manager to benefit from their expertise. The local police talk to the children to help them to understand their role, and that they are a community resource and not to be feared. Leaders and managers have appropriately escalated concerns about a child who has been out of school for several terms.

Leaders and managers promote equality, diversity and inclusion. They work to ensure that children have opportunities to learn about their environment and the society in which they live. One-to-one sessions provide opportunities for the staff to discuss diversity issues with the children.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	20 December 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure staff have frequent supervision in line with the organisation's policy. This supervision should include conversations about safeguarding, to develop the safeguarding culture of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). The name of the person supervised, the time and duration of the supervision must be recorded on the supervision document. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should ensure that children feel safe and are safe. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

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: 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: Fiona Lewis

Registered manager: Emma Phillips

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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