

SC373958

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2016.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 May 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: 6 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
24/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/09/2016	Full	Good
01/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

What does this home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 9.5)
Specifically, staff should ensure that all aspects of a known behaviour are clearly defined in risk assessments.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The outcomes for children are exceptional. Staff create a home away from home, which is warm and nurturing. Despite children arriving with significant challenges, they quickly settle and make progress, facilitated by strong and supportive relationships. This helps children to secure and develop a strong sense of belonging. This was confirmed by one parent, who said that staff are doing everything they possibly can to meet their child's needs.

Health is exceptionally well managed. Weekly plans have a strong focus on health promotion and well-being. Children respond well to staff suggestions and are keen to participate in sports and outdoor activities of their interest. Close relationships between staff and health services ensure that children receive specialist help when required.

The staff receive close support from a therapist, who works through the child and adolescent mental health service. This excellent practice enables staff to be resilient and attuned to children's needs. Regular meetings enable care practice to be reviewed and adapted for maximum effectiveness.

Staff place high emphasis on education. Established links with the virtual school ensure that packages of education are tailored to engage and maximise learning. Children's barriers to learning are understood and overcome. Staff create a timetable of learning activities in addition to each child's formal education. This engages all children in a full-time programme of learning. In addition to sitting their GCSEs, close links with the police have led to one child being accepted on a police cadets programme, encouraging them to explore this as a career option. Engagement in vocational, and academic-based learning has increased children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children's admissions into the home are thoughtful and are always well planned. As result, children feel valued and supported. This helps children settle quickly and gain a positive response to new expectations being made of them. Children's plans provide meaningful routines, structure and engagement to suit each child's needs. Outreach provides invaluable support to children moving on from the home. This is appreciated

and well received. Ongoing contact beyond planned support highlights the extreme importance and value placed on relationships between staff and children.

Children can effect change. Their views are sought as part of daily life. Examples include their input into the development of the home, including decoration and the designs for new bathrooms. Children learn to engage effectively in decision-making forums, for example attending their reviews, providing feedback and engaging in discussions that count. This empowers the children to grow in confidence and have a voice.

Most children make significant progress. Staff create a culture in which children can succeed. Children invest in relationships and use staff support to help them achieve successes that were not previously thought possible. One child is making significant changes and developing new skills for life and positive plans for their future, and they intend to manage their own business.

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

Staff are highly insightful and know the children well. They recognise early warning signs and indicators that trigger difficult behaviour. Daily support plans have been developed to include the 'Thrive' approach. This provides practical strategies and techniques to identify and support children's emotional development. In addition to this, 'windows of tolerance' are being introduced. These help the children to develop awareness, skills and strategies to self-soothe and regulate their emotions.

Staff are attuned to the children. They actively demonstrate the playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy parenting model and are reflective in their delivery of care. High emphasis is placed on developing staff skills, and staff say that they are well trained in these models of care.

Staff have the knowledge and insight to recognise risks around exploitation. They use these skills to work industriously with children and key professionals to safeguard children and minimise risk. For example, a child with a history of absence, substance misuse and criminal exploitation is using substance misuse support, attending college and is not going missing. Children attribute their progress to feeling valued and safe in their home.

Staff engage children in meaningful conversations which focus on key areas of importance. Children report the significance of these discussions, which help them to reflect on their experiences and inspire them to make positive changes to enrich their lives.

Risk assessment processes are strong and plans clearly record known behaviours and how these will be managed to mitigate risk. Post incident debriefs inform new strategies to aid children. However, on one occasion, a review of child's risk assessment failed to clearly define a new risk that had emerged.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has been in post since 2016. His leadership and management of the home are outstanding. He leads with great enthusiasm, passion and care. While his expectations of staff are high, he leads by example to demonstrate the level of expertise and skills he requires from others. This approach demonstrates his dedication to wanting the very best care and outcomes for children.

Leaders and managers provide high staffing levels, thus enabling children to receive excellent levels of support and attention. Staff are given high-quality and purposeful supervision, which supports the well-being of the team. One member of staff commented that 'leaders and managers are great, approachable, highly supportive and encouraging'. The style of management promotes a culture in which staff are nurtured, thus deepening their emotional capacity to care for children's complex needs.

Professionals are impressed by the level of insight and knowledge of the registered manager and are complimentary about how he uses his skills to guide the team. One social worker said that the registered manager provided invaluable nurturing activities. They also said that children feel reassured by the strength and presence of managers.

Leaders and managers review, analyse and evaluate care practice effectively. Actions inform development work, for example when introducing new training, improving records and increasing opportunities for children. Leaders and managers keep abreast of changes in practice and guidance, both locally and nationally, in order to advance the service.

Staff are skilled at working with attachment practices and understand a range of therapeutic parenting techniques. They are confident in their knowledge of the home's ethos and values, which are intrinsically linked to their actions and practice. Consequently, they deliver well-informed care that is in keeping with the home's statement of purpose.

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: SC373958

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: Scott Lipa

Inspector

Joe Davys, social care inspector

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