

SC391503

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home, which is run by the local authority, provides short breaks or long stays for up to four children who may have physical and/or learning disabilities. The manager has been registered for this home since February 2009.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 December 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 26 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2018	Full	Good
21/06/2017	Full	Outstanding
04/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/08/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise, have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children continue to make good progress. During their short breaks, they build trusting relationships with the staff. The children benefit from a range of stimulating activities and benefit from spending time with their friends.

The children's parents said that their children look forward to their short breaks. One parent said their child has made progress with her independence skills since using the service.

The staff provide routine and structure that help the children to feel safe and secure. The staff encourage positive behaviours, which supports the children to understand expectations. The staff respond quickly to the children when they become heightened. They provide a consistent approach and, consequently, the children have started to manage some of their behaviours. The staff celebrate the children's achievements, which builds the children's self-confidence.

The children's placement plans are comprehensive and support the staff to work effectively with the children and keep them safe. Children work with the staff to write an 'All about me' plan. This helps the children to say what is important to them.

The staff have a good understanding of the children's complex needs. They have had relevant training to enable them to fully meet the children's health needs. The specialist nurse provides individualised protocols, meaning that the staff are guided and supported by a health professional.

The children have regular key-working sessions and children's meetings. The staff use these meetings to gain the children's views. Some of the children are non-verbal or have limited verbal communication. Therefore, it is important that the staff demonstrate how they gain those children's views and wishes and act on them. There is little evidence of how the staff do this.

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

The children each have an individual, comprehensive risk assessment that is reviewed and updated regularly. This supports the staff to work consistently to keep the children safe.

The staff rarely use physical interventions. When these do take place, the staff speak with the children about the incident. However, the staff do not consider the children's different communication needs when recording these conversations.

The staff have undertaken safeguarding training and have a good understanding of who to report concerns to. The designated officer has attended the staff meetings as part of the safeguarding training. Parents said that they are confident that the staff understand their children's vulnerabilities and can keep their children safe.

The children can name a member of staff with whom they would talk if they are upset. One child has made a complaint. This was dealt with immediately and the child was made aware of the outcome.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is extremely dedicated to her work and she inspires her team. She clearly wants children to progress while enjoying their stay. Her enthusiasm permeates the staff team and is clearly evident. The staff said that they feel extremely well led by the approachable and accessible manager.

The manager strives for continuous improvement and actively researches effective approaches to support this. These approaches are used to underpin and build good working practices. Risk assessments and behaviour plans have been adapted to align with the behaviour model used by staff.

The manager supports the staff to research training to help them work with the children effectively. The manager gives individual staff responsibility for specific areas of practice. This enables the staff to develop their skills and share their learning and contributes to staff retention. All the staff have achieved a relevant level 3 qualification or are working towards it.

Children are clearly at the centre of this service. Parents and professionals said that the manager goes above and beyond to ensure that children have the best possible experiences and are enabled to progress their social and independence skills. One child has benefited from a highly personalised approach to meeting his needs. The staff have used Braille on the walls in his room to help him to develop his independence. Another child has a highly personalised plan so that the staff can actively work to reduce her anxieties about moving on.

All staff benefit from the manager's open-door policy and regular team meetings in which practice is shared and children are put at the forefront of discussion.

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: SC391503

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Registered provider address: Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford,
Central Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

Responsible individual: Nigel Stock

Registered manager: Joyce Hunnibell

Inspector

Trish Palmer, social care inspector

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