

SC391503

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority and provides short breaks or long stays for up to four children with physical and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2022.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 6 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2022	Full	Good
06/07/2021	Full	Good
18/12/2019	Full	Good
26/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, 21 children were accessing respite care on a rotational basis and one child was living at the home.

Staff are nurturing and kind, and they actively encourage children to take part in meaningful activities. Staff understand how to communicate with children who have complex communication needs. Children are happy and relaxed and enjoy spending time with staff, for example using an interactive mat with staff in a sensory room. Staff have built warm and positive relationships with the children, who are at ease in staff's company.

Two parents said that they cannot fault the staff or manager. The communication is excellent. One parent said that the manager and staff are always there to support them. Parents are confident in the care that their children receive.

Many of the children are non-verbal. Staff are curious and find creative ways to seek their wishes and feelings. The staff and the manager regularly consult with the children. The children were also visited by the Children in Care Council. Children's views were gathered independently by the staff, and they expressed that they enjoy their stays and activities at the home.

Children take part in a range of activities, including day trips, visits to the zoo, a local community hub and theatre productions. The children thoroughly enjoy these enriching experiences.

Friendships are promoted. Managers ensure that children have opportunities to stay at the home at the same time as their friends. The children also spend time with their friends from school at a local community hub.

Staff help children to work towards independence targets. Staff encourage children to make choices about their care. Consequently, children achieve important targets to increase their independence and well-being.

The home is spacious and well decorated, with several communal rooms for children to relax in. There is a sensory room and a large garden for children to play in. Children's bedrooms cater for a range of children's needs. The children personalise their bedrooms on their stays.

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

The children are supervised well. Staff use their relationships with children to encourage positive behaviours. The staff have had specific safeguarding disabled children training. Parents and social workers say that children are safeguarded effectively.

Some children's needs include behaviour support. Effective behaviour support plans have been created by a psychologist and include input from the manager, school staff and parents. Plans include behaviour support guidance with strategies that staff implement to help children to safely manage their emotions. Children's behaviours are well understood.

There has been one safeguarding incident. The manager ensured that this was investigated promptly. The manager informs relevant professionals about safeguarding incidents. This action means that children are safeguarded effectively.

There has been one episode of a child going missing from home. This incident was brief. The staff took appropriate action and followed procedures. The child had an independent return home interview.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is experienced and has a relevant qualification. She has been registered for nearly a year and is supported by two experienced deputy managers.

Since the last inspection, there was a two-week period when the home operated outside of its conditions of registration. Senior managers made a decision to move a child into the home under emergency circumstances. The child was supported predominantly by agency staff, who had training to meet the child's behavioural needs.

During this period, there were four physical interventions with the child, which were necessary. On two occasions, staff needed additional support from the police. This was appropriate in the circumstances. However, the records lack detail and are confusing. It is unclear which agency staff were involved in holding the child. There are no records of the staff being debriefed or the child being spoken to. The manager did not oversee these physical interventions as she had not received training in the physical intervention method used. Consequently, leaders and managers have failed to take appropriate action or show necessary curiosity to satisfy themselves that the physical interventions were appropriate.

On one occasion, leaders and managers have failed to notify Ofsted of a significant incident. On another occasion, leaders and managers have failed to notify Ofsted of a significant incident without delay. On another occasion, leaders and managers have not provided sufficient information when notifying Ofsted of a significant incident. In each of these incidents, the manager has taken action to safeguard children. However, failure to notify Ofsted reduces Ofsted's ability to monitor the home effectively.

Most staff hold a relevant level 3 diploma or are working towards the qualification within the agreed time frames. Some of the staff hold a level 5 qualification. The

staff benefit from bespoke training from community nurses. The staff competently support children with complex health needs.

Staff say that they receive good guidance and have regular supervision sessions which are helpful, and the managers are approachable and very supportive.

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 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)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, ensure that: physical intervention records are clear; physical interventions are reviewed by the manager for effectiveness and appropriateness; staff are debriefed following all physical interventions and that debriefs are recorded; the child is spoken to, to get their views, following any physical interventions.	23 November 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))	23 November 2023

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: SC391503

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Joy Piper

Registered manager: Rebecca Perry

Inspectors

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector
Anver Rose, Social Care Inspector

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