

SC396813

Registered provider: Chailey Heritage Foundation

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a charity. It provides care for up to 27 children with profound physical disabilities, sensory impairments and complex medical needs who may also have learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, 13 children were staying in the three bungalows. This includes children who live at the home long term and those who attend for weekly boarding and short breaks.

A non-maintained special school is also on site, catering for children and young people aged three to 19 years. Adults receive residential care in Care Quality Commission-registered homes on the same site. A team of nurses, therapists and specialists, provided by Sussex Community Foundation Trust, is also based on site and provides medical support. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this setting.

There has been no registered manager since November 2023. The current manager has been in post since November 2023 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 7 May 2024

Date of last inspection: 7 November 2023

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children continue to benefit from good-quality care from staff who prioritise children's safety and well-being. When safeguarding concerns are brought to managers' attention, they take swift and decisive action to ensure the safety of children. They identify any shortfalls in practice and take steps to ensure that learning from incidents is used effectively to reduce the risk of a similar incident happening again.

A priority for managers in recent weeks has been to help the children and staff come to terms with the passing away of a child who previously attended for short breaks. Staff say they have benefited from good support from managers and from debriefs with the nursing team. This has enabled them to provide children with sensitive, individualised support to help them cope with the loss of a friend. Children have also benefited from the support of a specialist advocate.

There have been some improvements to recruitment processes, but managers are not carrying out all the checks required by the Children's Home Regulations (2015). Specifically, managers do not explore candidates' reasons for leaving all previous positions involving work with children and vulnerable adults. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.

The manager has recognised that record-keeping systems could be more streamlined and is seeking to identify a suitable electronic system. In the meantime, she is working closely with house managers to ensure that children's care and support plans are updated regularly and clearly describe how to meet children's needs. Some children's plans are yet to be updated, but staff know children well and so this shortfall is not having a negative impact on the quality of care that children receive.

All staff, including agency staff, are now receiving supervision at agreed intervals. However, supervision records do not always demonstrate how managers are making sure that all staff know how to safely meet children's needs in line with their care plans and risk assessments. Additionally, inspectors identified one supervision record that described a potential safeguarding concern. This concern had not been brought to the manager's attention. During the inspection, the manager took action to address the concern.

In response to recommendations made at the last inspection, managers have reviewed the policies on the use of CCTV and equipment that restricts access to parts of the home. Decisions to use this equipment are made with children's safety and best interests in mind. However, not all children's plans demonstrate that these decisions are subject to regular and meaningful review.

Monthly visits by an independent visitor provide a rigorous level of scrutiny. The manager has also developed systems that enable her to closely monitor all aspects of the home. She demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement by creating improvement plans to address shortfalls identified through internal and external monitoring processes.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/11/2023	Full	Good
30/11/2022	Full	Good
21/09/2021	Full	Good
13/08/2019	Full	Good

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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))	30 June 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home are only made when this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the written policy about the use of CCTV and other monitoring equipment describes how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home, in accordance with regulation 24. Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person should ensure that case records are kept up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that supervision of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC396813

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Chailey Heritage Foundation

Responsible individual: Gareth Germer

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspection Manager
Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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