

SC397293

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home looks after children and young people who have been diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum, and/or have learning disabilities.

The registered manager has been registered since April 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 May 2019

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: 3 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2018	Full	Good
12/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
21/08/2017	Full	Good
30/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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, 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— undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33(4)(a)) This is with reference to training on specific communication methods used by children in the home.	01/07/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that any actions from previous review of quality of care reports produced by them are considered when the next review is undertaken, to ensure their completion. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good care and support from the staff team. From their starting points, children make progress in all areas of their lives. They present as happy and form meaningful relationships with staff and each other.

Children are supported to achieve by a range of professionals and agencies. Staff understand their complex needs well. They ensure that specialist support is made available in a timely manner. Staff support parents and carers to be involved in the care

of their children. This increases the self-esteem and sense of belonging for children living at the home.

Children have their general and complex health needs well met. Staff work with a range of specialist services. They refer children for assessments. They ensure that their needs are known, met and reviewed. Staff act as positive advocates for the children in their care. They act to ensure that children receive the specialist help and support they need. Staff promote and support the complex health needs of children well.

Children attend specialist education provisions and have excellent attendance and engagement. An assistant headteacher praised the staff for their collaborative working and support. They said: 'The child is making above expected progress. Excellent support is provided by the manager and staff team. They have a good understanding of the child's complexities. They work well with me and the pastoral team.'

Children feel listened to. They know how to make a complaint and do so confidently. One child raised a concern about the lack of Wi-Fi in the home. This was considered by the manager and Wi-Fi has now been installed. Children also have regular visits from an independent advocate. This service is invaluable for those children who may not be able to express their views, wishes or feelings.

Children have a range of social activities offered to them. They have been on holidays abroad and in this country. They go out with staff to local places and try new things. This increases their sense of belonging and widens their experiences. One child recently went to London with staff to give a talk at an advocacy event. Staff support children to have positive and fun experiences.

Staff prepare children well for their eventual move to adult service provisions. They have a detailed understanding of the complex needs of children. They work closely with adult services and other agencies. They advocate for children to ensure that they move on to the right provision. The manager understands that there is a need for careful planning for children who are moving on. Staff support children to learn independence skills. This enables them to take increased personal responsibility for their own lives.

Staff support children to have positive time with their families. One parent praised the staff for how well they support them. Staff want parents to have quality time with their children. They take children and their families out into the community whenever possible, so that they can enjoy fun activities together.

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

Staff understand the actual and potential risks posed to, and by, the children. They provide care and support which are informed by the known risks. They are mindful of the need to also support children to take age-appropriate risks. They are currently considering how to support one child to learn to use public transport unaided.

There have been no reports of children going missing from the home. Staffing levels ensure that children are supervised and supported to a high level at all times. Risk assessments include clear guidance on the procedures to be followed if children go missing. Staff also consider the risks of bullying and other forms of abuse. They maintain good records of any issues or concerns. They report them to managers and placing social workers in a timely manner. This protects children from actual or potential harm.

Staff understand the complex needs of children. They have detailed behaviour-support plans in place. They understand the potential triggers for children to display challenging or aggressive behaviours. They respond sensitively to children's changing behaviours. Children present as feeling safe and secure.

The use of restraint is minimal in the home. Staff only use such measures where there is an immediate risk of harm to, or from, a child. Staff record such events and ensure that children understand the reason for the use of restraint. The manager considers all records to ensure that the use of restraint is appropriate and proportionate.

The selection and recruitment of staff is safe and robust. It prevents unsuitable people from being recruited to work in the home and with vulnerable children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has worked in this home for several years, and previously worked in similar settings. She has the necessary skills and experience to perform the role. She is currently studying for her level 5 management diploma.

The manager demonstrates a detailed awareness and understanding of the complex needs of the children. She is well respected by the staff and children in the home. She works closely and proactively with involved agencies and parents to ensure positive outcomes for the children in her care.

Children's views are routinely sought by the staff team. Imaginative methods are used to elicit their wishes, views and feelings. The manager considers responses from children in order to further improve the quality of care and services provided.

The manager undertakes regular reviews of the quality of care provided for children. She then produces detailed reports. The most recent report did not reflect on actions set in the preceding six-month report. This means that the home's progress is not being evaluated in detail, and areas for improvement are not being identified. A recommendation has been set to address this shortfall.

Due to some staff shortages and sickness, there have been times when formal supervision has not taken place. Staff have not had supervision sessions with the frequency set out in the home's policies. This does not provide them with an opportunity to discuss their work and performance. The manager accepted that there is a need to address this. A recommendation has been set to address this shortfall.

Not all staff have had an annual appraisal of their performance completed. The manager acknowledged this, and was aware of the need to prioritise it.

Children use a variety of communication methods to express their wishes, views and feelings. The current training programme does not provide staff with the necessary skills to be able to confidently and competently communicate with all of the children. Not all of the staff have completed training courses on the particular communication methods used by the children. This would further improve the staff team's competence.

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: SC397293

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Derby City Council, Treasurer's Department, Council House, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FE

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Helen Wilson

Inspector:

Tracy Murty: social care inspector

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