

SC397293

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for children with autism and/or learning disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home.

The home is led by a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

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: 13 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2023	Full	Good
21/03/2023	Full	Good
19/05/2021	Full	Good
14/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous inspection, two children have left the home, and two children have moved into the home. The inspector spent time with all the children during the visit.

The children experience a nurturing approach from staff who provide positive and consistent care. As a result, children build positive relationships with the staff. Children have fun and laugh with the staff who care for them.

Children are involved and supported in their preparation for leaving the home. A lot of consideration and sensitive planning goes into preparing them to move. Children are able to visit their new home with staff and purchase items they need for their new home before moving in. Where appropriate, the manager and staff continue to provide emotional support and contact once children move. One child who moved away continues to visit the home, or staff visit him at his home on a regular basis because they understand the gravity of such life-changing experiences.

Children can visit the home before they move in. Children's transition plans are well thought out before they arrive. Managers understand the importance of the home meeting the child's wishes and feelings before they move in.

Children's bedrooms are personalised with their favourite items or characters. The manager and staff work with social workers and others who know the child well to make sure that everything is in place before they move in. This helps the team to support children to settle on arrival and make them comfortable.

Children communicate their wishes and feelings in various ways. Staff have a detailed understanding of each child's expressions and methods of communication. They involve children in all aspects of their care and act on what they say when possible. Staff observe and listen to children effectively. They understand the children well.

Children's health needs are well considered and met by the team. Children have comprehensive health plans. Staff work very closely and proactively with various health services. This supports improvements in children's health and well-being.

Children attend education daily. Well-established routines and structure ensure that children are well prepared for the school day and for when they return home. Staff work with education providers to ensure that there is effective partnership working to help children make good progress.

Children are encouraged and supported to explore their interests and take part in fun, stimulating activities. They access community activities on a regular basis.

Children have experienced various short breaks and holidays. One child enjoyed a holiday abroad in Portugal, another child went to Darwin Forest. Children's participation in new experiences supports them to grow in self-esteem and confidence.

The home has undergone internal improvements and is clean and spacious. Plans are in place to further improve communal areas. The outside garden has been out of bounds for a protracted length of time. It poses potential health and safety risks for the children. Parts of the soft flooring have lifted, and it is not suitable for the needs of the children. The manager has raised the matter with senior leaders, but it remains in need of improvement. This limits and restricts the children's participation and choice of activities when at home.

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

Children benefit from trusting relationships with staff who provide a strong and consistent routine. Children grow in confidence and self-esteem, which helps them feel safe and secure.

The manager and staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities very well. Safeguarding training is thorough and planned to meet the children's complex needs. Staff understand how to keep children safe. They have an in-depth knowledge of children's vulnerabilities and the potential risks they may encounter. As a result, they anticipate any potential hazards or risks and take appropriate action to ensure children's safety.

Children are safer because their risk assessments and plans provide clarity and direction for staff. Plans are updated regularly, so they accurately reflect children's vulnerabilities and the potential risks they may encounter. These plans provide staff with the direction they need to support and protect children.

The staff can manage and support children through any worries or anxieties they may have. Children have the stability they need, and this helps to keep them safe. Staff's attentiveness helps children to feel a sense of security.

Although rare, staff sometimes hold children in response to difficult situations. Managers scrutinise records to ensure that any holds used are appropriate and proportionate. Children are offered sensitive support following any incident.

All staff have completed mandatory training in key areas, such as safeguarding and first aid. Team meetings and each staff member's one-to-one meeting with their manager include safeguarding matters as an agenda item, but they do not always address it. The team would benefit from further opportunities to have these discussions during their one-to-one meetings.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager talks with compassion and understanding about children. She is reflective and recognises the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager has a clear vision for the home and remains focused on bringing about continued progress because she knows this will benefit children.

Staff speak with pride about each child and enjoy their work. They express pleasure in spending time with children and supporting them as they grow and develop. Staff are well supported by the management team and each other. The manager and management team are visible and approachable. They work well together, and staff morale is positive. The team has ambitious, creative plans to continue to improve the outcomes for children.

The monitoring by the manager is robust. Effective management systems are in place. Records are of a high standard and provide detailed analysis of care provision. Regular audits take place, with actions to address any shortfalls. This means the manager clearly understands the home's strengths and weaknesses. Development plans are in place to ensure continual improvement.

The manager strives to promote the development of the staff team. She supports the staff's development and growth. The management team has developed workshops on the specific needs of the children and practices that underpin staff's work with children in the home. Staff access a range of bespoke training essential to the individual needs of the children. However, despite the diagnosis of pica in some children, staff have not received training in this area. This is a shortfall in the staff's training and development.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the external environments are safe and suitable to meet children's needs.	31 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the records and outcomes of supervision sessions and team meetings reflect discussions on safeguarding issues. Discussions should allow staff to reflect on their practice and the wider external risks to children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. This is in relation to ensuring that staff receive training in pica awareness. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: SC397293

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: The Council house, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FS

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Samantha Watts

Inspector

Thirza Smith, Social Care Inspector

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