

SC415400

Registered provider: Gloucestershire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to care for up to six children up to the age of 18 years. The home provides care for children who have physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities. The children's placements are made under short-break arrangements. The children's home is managed by the local authority.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 April 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 4 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2018	Full	Good
03/10/2017	Full	Good
31/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
27/10/2016	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, 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
25: Fire precautions (1) After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must– (d) ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25(1)(d)) In particular, ensure that all staff and children have taken part in an evacuation drill and that the fire drill records consistently identify who was involved.	30/06/2019
44: Independent person: visits and reports (1) The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (2) When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person– (a) if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44(1), (2)(a)) In particular, ensure that the independent person carries out their visits when the children are in the home to gather the children's views and to observe staff practice.	30/06/2019

Recommendations

- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

In particular, ensure that these records are of a consistently good standard, reflect the discussion held, record any actions required and include a review of these actions.

- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this (regulation 7(2)(b)(iii)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 49 and 50, paragraph 9.60)

In particular, ensure that the member of staff carrying out this work is a person who was not involved in the restraint. Ensure that this is clearly evidenced in the records.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality, individualised care. Staff know the children well. They understand their needs and ensure that these needs are met effectively. Staff have built strong, trusting relationships with the children and their families, and have each child's well-being at the centre of their practice. Children have positive experiences here and make progress. Staff are proud of the children's achievements.

Children move into the home successfully and with confidence. Staff manage these moves carefully and sensitively by enabling children and their families to determine the pace at which the children move in. Staff visit the children at their own home to come to know them and enable the children and their families to visit the short-break service as many times as they want before starting overnight stays. The manager skilfully matches the needs of the children to ensure that each child has a positive and fun visit.

Staff competently use a variety of systems to communicate with the children. For example, they use signs and objects of references and make sure that they give children time to understand what is being asked of them. As a result, children can make choices, learn to interact with the staff and other children and develop their self-confidence.

Staff provide children with a wide range of fun and purposeful activities. Children particularly enjoy the soft-play room, the garden and its play equipment and going for walks. These positive experiences benefit the children, and the lovely, personalised journals collated by staff capture the children's memories of their visits.

The home is a welcoming, comfortable and relaxed environment that also provides children with specialist equipment, should they need it. Prior to each child coming in for their stay, staff carefully prepare the home and personalise the children's individual bedrooms and communal areas. This makes each child feel comfortable, relaxed and ready to have fun.

Staff help the children effectively to develop self-help skills, based on their individual needs, preferences and abilities. Some children need help with personal care. Staff ask the children and their families how they would like this care to be carried out. Children receive care that is respectful and meets their individual needs.

Parents and social workers are very positive about the care that staff provide. Parents said that their children love coming to the home, and one parent told the inspector that using the short-breaks service had 'helped our family to stay together'.

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

The safeguarding culture is strong and effective. Children feel safe during their visits. Staff have a detailed knowledge of the safeguarding policies and understand their duty of care to protect the children. This includes a good understanding and management of

the children's additional vulnerabilities. Staff implement the safeguarding policies effectively, and this keeps children safe.

Children's behaviour is managed well. Behaviour support plans are individualised and provide staff with clear guidance about how to support the children. Staff ensure that these plans are up to date and reflect children's current behavioural needs. Staff help the children to learn the skills to manage their own behaviours. This approach is effective, evidenced by the reduction in the number of incidents.

Restraint is used only as a last resort to keep children safe. Children are spoken with about incidents and the use of restraint. However, sometimes the member of staff who spoke with the child was also the adult involved in the incident. This reduces the opportunity for independent assessment of what happened.

Staff understand children's individual vulnerabilities and manage risk well. Written assessments are detailed and help staff to ensure that ways to reduce risks are implemented consistently. As a result, children are helped to join in with a wide range of activities and positive experiences while being kept safe.

Fire safety equipment is checked frequently, and fire evacuation drills are held regularly. However, fire drill records do not consistently include the names of the staff and children who were involved in the evacuation. This makes it difficult for the manager to confirm that everyone has been involved in a drill.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed well and in a child-centred way. The manager is very experienced and well qualified for the role. She is an excellent role model who has high standards for both herself and the staff team. This approach ensures that the service is run efficiently, and that the children and their families receive good-quality care.

The manager is forward-thinking and finds creative ways to maintain and improve the quality of care. She has started the process of succession planning to ensure that the management of the home remains good.

Monitoring of the home is now more effective. The manager and deputy manager analyse and evaluate the work undertaken at the home effectively. The six-monthly quality review report is detailed and has helped the manager to document the home's strengths and areas for improvement. The previous requirement and recommendations are met.

Staff are well trained, experienced and provide children with stability. Supervision is regular, but records of these sessions do not always reflect the discussion held, confirm the agreed actions or include a review of the previous actions. Non-specific supervision records could lead to staff being unclear about what is expected of them.

Consultation with children and their families is excellent. Staff advocate for the children

and their families and share effective practices with families so that skills learned during the short breaks can be used in family homes. Children's views have been used to improve the service.

Children's personal records are well organised, up to date and useful. These records provide staff with clear guidance about how to care for the children. However, staff are not consistently signing these records using their full name. This makes it hard for the reader to confirm who has completed these legal documents.

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 difference 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 'Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC415400

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2TG

Responsible individual: Amanda Henderson

Registered manager: Trudy Barnfield

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, social care inspector

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