

SC415400

Registered provider: Gloucestershire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority. It provides short-break care for a maximum of six children aged up to 18 years with learning and/or physical disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 23 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 November 2021

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: 10 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/04/2019	Full	Good
04/06/2018	Full	Good
03/10/2017	Full	Good
31/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who visit this home for short-breaks make significant progress with the support and commitment of the staff team. Parents told the inspector that their children's communication skills have developed since they started visiting. Staff have worked hard to help one child to develop the confidence to share his thoughts about the activities he would like to do. This was an area of difficulty for the child, who would often say 'yes' rather than express his views. Staff have also worked hard with another child, whose needs are very complex, to ensure that she has the opportunity to make choices and that her preferences are heard.

Relationships between the home and children's families are very strong. Parents told the inspector that they appreciate the pre-visit call to ensure that the home has the most up-to-date information about their child prior to their stay. Staff work with parents to ensure that their child's arrival to the home and departure from the home are smooth and child focused. For example, staff collect some children from local schools at the start of their stay to reduce the number of adults needed and/or parents having to make long journeys for their child to use the service.

Children are cared for by a staff team that works effectively to provide the best possible experience for the children during their stay. One child told the inspector that he likes staying at the home and spoke positively about the relationships he has with staff and the activities he likes to do. Another child scored the home '10 out of 10'. Staff provide children with experiences in the local community where possible. They organise trips for children, such as to local attractions and the pantomime.

Staff are warm and friendly in their manner. However, the home environment has a practical/clinical feel. For example, the lounge areas and children's bedrooms lack the decoration needed to be welcoming and relaxing spaces for children. The inspector found empty bookshelves, strip lighting and plain walls, which detracts from the ethos of the home.

Some of the facilities in this home provide children with experiences which they would not otherwise have. For example, there is a new bath which is enjoyed by lots of the children as it gives them a multisensory experience with lights, bubbles and music. However, the en-suite showers are ill thought out for the needs of the children using them, and do not promote children's independence.

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

Staff take extra care to ensure that children's needs are well understood and that they are kept safe during their short break visit. Staff routinely visit the children in different settings to help them to gain new perspectives and develop their understanding of the children's needs. Staff share their observations and knowledge with others to the benefit of the children.

Staff are strong advocates for the children. They take a proactive approach in meeting the needs of the children in their care. For example, staff have worked hard to ensure that a child has a wheelchair that meets her needs and have made referrals to other services when appropriate.

Staff work effectively in partnership with multiple professionals. Social workers and nurses told the inspector that they enjoy working with the staff team and value the difference the staff make to children's lives. One professional said that they wish the children could have more short breaks at the home.

Staff work alongside parents and professionals to help children to achieve their goals. Staff understand the role they play in helping children to achieve and reach their potential. Staff promote independence at every opportunity. For example, one child is supported to go shopping, select what he would like to eat and cook his meal. Other children are learning how to look after themselves and run a bath. Children are encouraged to develop skills appropriate to their needs.

There are few incidents in this home. Staff work hard to understand the vulnerability and risks for the children and mitigate against these. Staff act promptly when concerns are identified. For example, unusual bruising to one child was raised quickly and efficiently.

When incidents occur, the details are recorded promptly with timely management oversight. However, the debrief with staff is not always recorded fully and does not capture what could have been done differently. Children are not routinely consulted on their views and feelings in a timely manner after an incident. Staff do not utilise the tools they have effectively to ask children about how they are feeling.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager leads the home to be child centred and this is the basis for the decisions made within the home. Staff feel they have the support of the manager to make decisions that are in the children's best interests, even when this falls outside of the home's core responsibilities.

Staff told the inspector that they feel well supported in their role and that managers are approachable. Several staff told the inspector that they love working at the home with the children and alongside like-minded colleagues.

Supervision is provided regularly to all staff. However, supervision sessions are not comprehensively recorded. Details of the discussions and reflective conversations are often missing or broadly summarised, and some responses are repeated in the monthly recordings.

Staff receive mandatory training in a timely manner and feel well trained to fulfil their roles. Staff receive specific training on safeguarding children with disabilities.

However, other training is too generic, and does not focus on the needs of the children they care for.

There is a stable and consistent staff team in the home. The arrangements in place in respect of safer recruitment are good. Reference checks are carried out and gaps in employment are explored.

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; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are accurately recorded and staff receive training that is relevant to the specific needs of the children they provide care for.	31 January 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	22 December 2021

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35

(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

In particular, ensure that debriefs with staff are fully recorded and that children's views are sought and recorded using their preferred method of communication.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. Homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the children's bedrooms and lounge areas are decorated to create a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression and that the en-suite facilities promote children's independence. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC415400

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Amanda Henderson

Registered manager: Helen Morgan

Inspector

Katie Ratcliffe, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021