

SC415400

Gloucestershire County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority and provides short-break care for up to six children and young people aged up to 18 years with a learning and/or physical disability. The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2020.

Inspection date: 23 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was carried out because the home had not been visited since April 2019. At the time of this visit, two children were staying at the home.

This monitoring inspection included a visit to the home to speak with the children and staff, and to check the environment. Some records were reviewed at the home, including photographs and communication tools that help children share their wishes and feelings. In response to the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, a review of other records and discussions with professionals took place remotely.

Children are cared for in a bright, well-maintained and clean environment. The manager and staff take pride in the home and ensure that toys and outdoor play equipment are of a good standard. The manager strives to have a 'home from home' environment. However, there are locks on all of the internal doors of this home and large signs to show fire exits and the dangers of electricity. This reduces the domestic feel of the home.

During the pandemic, staff have been creative to ensure that children have fun by doing activities such as baking, arts and crafts, playing games, taking country walks, and trips to local parks and Westonbirt Arboretum. Consequently, children enjoy their time at the home and develop their social skills.

The manager and staff team prioritise the safety of children. For example, when children make allegations or arrive with unexplained bruising, concerns are reported immediately to social workers and the designated officer. The manager keeps detailed records and has thorough oversight with clear actions for follow-up. However, on several occasions, some notifications have not been made to Ofsted or have been delayed.

Managers and staff use numerous creative ways to gather children's thoughts and feelings, depending on the children's needs. They prioritise gathering children's wishes to ensure that children's voices are heard, for example about the care they receive and what matters to them. Each child has a 'communication passport' for staff to use to enable this. However, children do not have access to Wi-Fi, which means that children at this home are not being offered the same opportunities as other children.

Children receive care from an experienced and committed staff team. The manager ensures that staff keep up to date with mandatory training and has good monitoring systems in place. However, two members of staff, who have worked at this home since 2016, do not have their Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare. It is not clear whether some staff's qualifications are equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare, as they were completed some time ago.

Parents and professionals did not raise any concerns about the care provided to children. A parent shared positive feedback about the care that staff provide, telling the inspector: 'I cannot praise them enough. I can relax and do not have to worry as I know he is safe. When he goes to school, he gets his overnight bag and it is because he loves to go there.'

A social worker told the inspector: 'Communication from [name of home] is exceptional....It is also evident that support workers really do take the time to build amazing relationships with the children and young people in their care. They know them so well and are continually showing creativity in their interactions and ways of getting the child's voice across, which informs many of our reviews and meetings.'

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

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 a disabled child accommodated in the home is provided with access to such aids and equipment as the child may require as a result of the child's disability in order to facilitate the child's communication with other persons. (Regulation 22 (4)) In particular, ensure that the home has Wi-Fi for children to use during their stays.	
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or	

works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b)) This refers specifically to waking night staff who do not have their Level 3 Qualification in Residential Childcare.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This is with regards to ensuring that notifications of significant events are made to Ofsted and that they are made promptly following concerns and allegations.	

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that locks on internal doors are removed to provide a homely environment for children. This will provide a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that an existing qualification is equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare and check whether the existing qualification has appeared in previous children's homes legislation or national minimum standards. The registered person should keep a record of the information they have considered, to establish 'equivalence'. ('Guide to the

children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 68, paragraphs 1.1 to 1.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC415400

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gloucestershire County Council

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

Responsible individual: Amanda Henderson

Registered manager: Helen Morgan

Inspector

Anna Gravelle, 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