

SC424351

Registered provider: Nottingham City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a local authority. The home provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 23 September 2022.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

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: 24 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/08/2021	Full	Good
01/05/2019	Full	Good
16/05/2018	Full	Good
22/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported to build relationships with staff at a pace that they feel comfortable with. Staff are patient and skilled at seizing opportunities where children may be more inclined to spend time with them. For example, staff will ask children to go clothes shopping or to try out a new recipe.

Although some children have struggled to attend health appointments, staff have continued to persevere to ensure that children's health needs are met. Staff have supported one child to have dental treatment. This is a big achievement because the child was anxious about the procedure and was initially unwilling to attend.

Some children struggle with their mental health, which affects their ability to cope with daily tasks. Staff recognise that children's ability to cope can fluctuate depending on their mood and life circumstances. Staff pay attention to what is happening in children's lives and consider how their emotional well-being may be affected. Staff have supported one child to engage in therapy. As a result, the child is now more able to recognise their own mental health needs. This is progress for the child.

Overall, children's educational progress varies and their commitment to learning is mixed. One child has thrived academically and has made progress. However, another child has disengaged from education and is not motivated to learn. This child's routine is not yet good, and they present as lethargic during the day. Although staff are working hard to help this child with their routine, progress remains slow.

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

Where children are vulnerable to exploitation, these risks are well documented and evaluated. All staff have relevant training and can identify the signs of exploitation. Risks to children are well understood and there are clear plans in place which help to keep children safe. For example, one document details all likely locations where a child may be if they are missing from home. These documents help to keep children safer.

Staff recognise the role that technology and social media can play in increasing risks for children; however, they also utilise the protective factors that they offer. For example, one child can send their location via an app when out in the community. This has helped to quickly locate a child when they have been at risk of harm. Staff encourage children to be open about their social media usage and to share any concerns. One child has removed unknown contacts from one of their social media accounts. This is a sign of progress.

Where children are particularly vulnerable, the manager has sought expertise from other professionals to ensure that the care provided is bespoke to each child. For

example, curfews have been decided based on risk as opposed to age. Boundaries for children are proportionate and have been made in accordance with the views of family members and the professional network. Staff have supported a child who struggles to engage to listen to professionals and to give them a chance to help.

Although the risk of harm remains high for some children, this is gradually reducing over time. Children are being supported by staff to recognise risk and this remains ongoing.

Although all plans identify risk, there is one plan which does not specifically detail what staff need to do if the child is at risk of harming themselves. This is necessary to ensure that the child receives safe and consistent care.

When children have been involved in serious incidents, the manager has recorded these appropriately and has maintained communication with Ofsted. Overall, staff take effective action to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is supported by an experienced responsible individual who previously managed the home. The manager has a good relationship with the children in her care and prioritises spending time with them. For example, the manager and staff have been on two holidays with one child.

Information gathered as part of this inspection indicates that not all staff have felt supported by management since the last inspection. It is acknowledged that these staff dynamics may have had some negative impact on the children who were previously cared for in the home. Since the last inspection, the staff team has changed. At this inspection, staff said that team dynamics and management support are good. The manager and the responsible individual acknowledge concerns and plan to address these.

Other professionals and family members are positive about the care being provided to children. They say that staff are resilient and committed. The manager uses an interpreting service to ensure that parents are kept up to date with information about their children's welfare. Family members and professionals say that communication with the home is excellent.

When bedroom searches are carried out, it is not always clear why these searches have happened or why children have not been present.

Although documents in relation to children's care are improving, some documents still contain jargon. The manager has a plan in place to make children's documents more accessible and for children's progress to be more easily recognised and built on. These processes are not yet embedded.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a child's bedroom is not generally entered without their permission. However, it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly. Usually, rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should monitor and review patterns and trends in staff turnover, whether agency or directly employed, and be able understand and, where possible, address any negative trends. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)
- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child, including their social worker, independent reviewing officer, teachers, clinicians and other health professionals. The registered manager could better monitor, record and reflect on children's progress. Due to this system not yet being in place, children do not have regular conversations with staff about their progress. Recordings for children could be made more meaningful. It is important for children to understand their life journey regarding their health and education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)

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: SC424351

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG

Responsible individual: Emma Read

Registered manager: Nisha Sandhu

Inspector

Andi Lilley-Tams, Social Care Inspector

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