

SC425786

Registered provider: Strode Park Foundation for People with Disabilities

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home provides care and accommodation for up to 10 children, with capacity for some to stay under short-break arrangements. Facilities are in place to meet the needs of children with learning and/or physical disabilities. The children's home is operated by a local charitable foundation and is also registered with the Care Quality Commission. At the time of inspection, there were eight children and young people staying in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2011.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 2023

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: 13 April 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/04/2021	Full	Good
11/02/2020	Full	Good
17/09/2019	Full	Inadequate
18/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people receive good-quality individualised care from a skilled and knowledgeable staff team. The nuances of each individual's communication styles are well understood and well responded to by staff, ensuring that children and young people's needs are met and they are able to contribute to making choices in their day-to-day lives.

Parents and external professionals are unanimous in their praise for the care that children and young people receive. Parents are clear that not only do staff care exceptionally well for children and young people, but they also support and advocate for parents, meaning that families are supported.

Leaders ensure that children and young people are at the forefront of all decision-making. They are quick to hold other professionals to account when children's needs are not met. This has a positive impact on children and young people, for example, by identifying suitable education placements and ensuring important transport arrangements are made.

Children and young people make significant progress, especially given their specific needs and vulnerabilities. They have been supported to walk unaided, cook a meal and look after their bedrooms. One young person has gone from crawling to standing and taking small steps unaided. The pride of this achievement is well shared by all.

Children and young people are supported to communicate how they feel, through regular one-to-one sessions. These are always carried out using a child or young person's preferred communication method and are well documented. This allows staff, leaders and parents to fully understand what is being taught and shared with children and young people and any concerns can be quickly responded to.

Complex health needs are well met. Good working relationships with relevant health professionals provide strong oversight and care plans are often written together with other professionals. Staff attend regular appointments with children and young people, and any changes are immediately shared with the team.

Children and young people have access to a wide range of activities. Staff have a good knowledge of individual interests and respond well to these. New experiences for children and young people are well planned, for example a recent trip to an ice show.

Despite good care planning for the children and young people in the home, there are currently more young adults living in the home than children. Leaders are aware of this, and this is not currently having a negative impact on either group. Managers

have begun to plan what services the home will offer going forward and the most appropriate registration for the home to hold.

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

Risks for children and young people are well understood by staff. Risk assessments are individualised and demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of current and evolving risks. These are regularly reviewed by managers to ensure that they are up to date.

When children and young people's behaviour has changed, staff and leaders are quick to respond. For example, they ensure a multi-agency approach to specific concerns, including self-harm. This supports children and young people.

Leaders have been quick to identify local safeguarding concerns, such as delays in getting medical support to the home, specifically, ambulances not arriving quickly enough. Leaders have recognised this and put suitable plans in place to help mitigate some of the risk.

Despite leaders' efforts to ensure that recruitment checks are carried out, during the inspection one recruitment file was found to be lacking key information, such as references. While this information was subsequently found, it was not available to the registered manager to support her decision-making regarding recruitment.

Responses to allegations and safeguarding concerns are robust. Detailed recording, coupled with good communication with external agencies, ensures that children and young people's safety remains paramount.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have high aspirations for those they care for. They are ambassadors for the children and young people who live in the home and are quick to communicate and share any issues or concerns that need to be raised. Children and young people are supported to have the same experiences as others who do not have their challenges. Opportunities are provided for all, and successes are shared and celebrated by the team.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the home's successes and challenges. Detailed monitoring reports highlight aspirational aims for children and young people and focus on the importance of the high-quality relationships in the care that is provided.

Leaders support staff to ensure their ongoing learning and development. This is done through formal training, but also in response to reviews of incidents of safeguarding concerns. This learning is supplemented by supervisions. Good-quality, detailed supervision notes show that staff are both supported and challenged to continue to develop. Staff are confident in leaders and managers and are quick to praise them for their support.

Despite the bedrooms and communal rooms being bright and well cared for, parts of the home are not as well maintained. Several of the structures in the garden, such as outhouses are significantly damaged and the soft play area needs deep cleaning to reduce the risk of slipping or falling. Inside the home, there are concerns regarding consistent electrical supply and hot water. Despite repeated requests by the registered manager for these to be fixed, wider organisational responses have been poor. During the inspection, some changes were made, with a commitment to resolving other concerns.

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 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 (2)(c)(i)(ii))	28 February 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b))	28 February 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))	28 February 2023

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: SC425786

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Strode Park Foundation for People with Disabilities

Registered provider address: Strode Park Foundation, Strode Park House, Lower Herne Road, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7NE

Responsible individual: Rebecca Richards

Registered manager: Laura Pearce

Inspectors

Mark Newington, Social Care Inspector
Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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