

SC441513

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to 6 children with learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, 5 children were living in the home, and they contributed to the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2022.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 March 2026

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: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Outstanding
20/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
29/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
08/02/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a home that is welcoming and shaped around their individual preferences and needs. The children's space reflects their personalities, with staff making thoughtful adjustments to ensure it feels both comfortable and familiar. Children are offered choice around how their home is decorated, allowing children to take ownership of their home.

Staff consistently seek and value children's views. Staff discussions with children cover a wide range of topics, including preferred activities, how they would like the home environment to feel and strategies for keeping themselves safe. Staff thoughtfully adapt conversations to children's individual communication needs, ensuring they can participate fully and meaningfully.

Children are praised and celebrated daily for their achievements and progress. Staff take genuine pride in every step the children make, recognising both the big milestones and the smaller, everyday successes. This consistent encouragement helps children feel valued and supported in their ongoing development.

Staff support children to develop independence skills that are appropriate to their age and individual needs. For children approaching adulthood, staff help them prepare for the next stage of their lives. Staff hold sensitive conversations with children to support children's understanding and ensure their views and wishes are fully considered. Strong multi-agency partnerships further support this process, ensuring transitions are well planned and firmly in the best interests of each child.

Children spend time with the people who matter most to them. Families remain closely involved in their children's lives and are welcomed into the home to take part in celebrations and share in their children's achievements. One family member said that the care their child receives is 'amazing'.

Staff build warm and nurturing relationships with children. Children feel comfortable around staff and relaxed within their home environment. Staff take time to truly understand each child and remain attuned to even subtle changes in behaviour or body language. Regular reviews of children's behaviours help staff identify patterns and explore what children may be communicating. This reflective approach strengthens staff practice and enables them to provide child-centred support moving forward.

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

Children are supported by staff to share any worries or concerns when they feel unhappy. Children's complaints are acknowledged promptly, and they are provided with age-appropriate information about the actions taken in response. Staff follow up with children afterwards to ensure they feel heard and are satisfied with the outcome.

An incident occurred involving medication in which several concerns were identified. These included a lack of timely medical intervention, non-adherence to the home's medication policy and delays in staff reporting and escalating the issue. As a result, there was significant delay in appropriate action being taken to ensure the safety of a child. Once senior management became aware, they undertook a thorough investigation. The registered manager and staff team have engaged in detailed reflection and learning to ensure improvements in practice and prevent a recurrence.

Children are supported sensitively during moments of distress. Staff respond calmly and reassuringly, helping children feel safe and understood when they are struggling. After any incident, staff check how children are feeling and continue to monitor their wellbeing. Staff encourage and support children to share their views using communication methods that best suit their individual needs. Management oversight is strong, with thoughtful consideration of what may have been happening for the child at the time and how to best support them moving forward.

Staff understand how to keep children safe. Risk assessments clearly identify current worries for each child and provide detailed guidance on the steps staff should take if a child is at risk of harm. These assessments are updated whenever needed, ensuring they remain accurate and reflective of each child's evolving needs.

Children are supported to develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe, both within the home and in the wider community. Staff take time to consider the most effective ways to engage each child in safety work, adapting their approaches so that information is accessible to each child. Children benefit from practical learning experiences that help them understand how to stay safe. For example, emergency services visited the home to explain their roles and help children learn what to expect in emergency situations.

Staff use restrictive practices only when necessary and as a last resort. All incidents are recorded in detail, providing a clear and transparent account of the measures used. Children are supported both during and after any incident, including being offered time and reassurance to express their feelings and reflect on their experience. Managers review every incident of restrictive practice, ensuring that the response was appropriate and proportionate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by dedicated managers who consistently prioritise the best interests of the children. Managers are proactive in supporting the staff team and in promoting ongoing staff development. Staff speak highly of the guidance and encouragement they receive from management. Staff report that they feel valued. Staff turnover is low, and many staff have worked in the home for a long period. This contributes to a stable and settled team, which promotes consistency of care for children.

Staff report that they have regular team meetings. It is evident that children remain the central focus of these discussions, with staff exploring all aspects of the children's lives and needs. Staff state that they find these meetings beneficial, as they provide space for the team to reflect and consider how best to support children.

Staff have access to regular supervision, which they report is supportive. Supervision sessions provide space to discuss children's needs and any safeguarding concerns in detail, as well as to reflect on staff members' own professional development. There is a strong focus on learning, development and training, ensuring staff are well equipped and supported to carry out their roles effectively.

Management oversight is consistent and evident throughout practice. Reviews are detailed and provide clear analysis of events and decision-making. When areas for improvement are identified, managers consider appropriate actions to strengthen staff practice and ensure learning is embedded. There are also regular audits that ensure complete oversight of the home.

Staff have completed mandatory training, including in safeguarding. Staff also have training in the individual needs of the children, including communication. This ensures that staff have the skills and knowledge to be responsive to children's evolving needs. Staff feel that they are equipped to meet the needs of children they are caring for and say that there is consideration of their ongoing training needs.

Professionals consistently highlight the team's dedication and high standard of care provided to children. They report that children's voices are actively heard and valued every day. Professionals share that staff are strong advocates for the children they support, with one professional stating that staff are 'aspirational'.

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on whistleblowing and feel confident to raise concerns when a child is at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that medical advice is sought following concerns over medication.	4 May 2026

The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them; medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. Paragraph (2) does not apply to medicine which— is stored by the child for whom it is provided in such a way that other persons are prevented from using it; and may be safely self-administered by that child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are familiar with the home's medication policy and that appropriate actions are taken following medication concerns.	4 May 2026
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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: SC441513

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Derbyshire County Council, County Offices, Matlock
DE4 3AG

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Stewart Toye

Inspector

Jess Baines, Social Care Inspector

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