

1229766

Registered provider: Aurora Care and Education Opco Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home. Most of the placements are for up to 52 weeks and are long term. The home also provides some short breaks. The organisation has a school, and accommodation for adults who have learning disabilities and complex needs, in the grounds. The home is registered to provide care for up to 23 children who have complex support and health needs. These needs include profound learning difficulties, and/or sensory and/or physical impairments.

The newly registered manager has worked at the home for over 25 years. She is currently studying for a level 5 qualification in managing children's residential services.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 December 2018

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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 23 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2017	Full	Good
26/09/2016	Full	Good

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
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	28/01/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ all staff have current training in de-escalation and physical intervention techniques; ■ individual training and competency assessments for complex care tasks are documented and reviewed sufficiently frequently; ■ all staff receive training in safeguarding disabled children; ■ all staff receive sufficiently regular, good-quality professional supervision. 	11/02/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the</p>	28/01/2019

<p>independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p> <p>A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p>	
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Recommendations

- Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, ensure that records of fire evacuations are accurate and clear. When it is not possible to evacuate a child for any reason, review and update the personal emergency evacuation plan for the child. In addition, undertake a night-time fire drill in each flat.
- Any home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working at the home in accordance with regulation 24. Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. The use of CCTV is regulated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Conduct (Home Office 2013). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)

In particular, review the use of audio and movement monitors in each child's bedroom.

- Children should be encouraged to develop positive relationships with others both in and outside the home as set out in the positive relationships standard. However, staff should be alert to the possibility that children may be at risk from such relationships including with other children at the home, staff, family members, friends and others outside the home, and they therefore should take appropriate steps to protect a child when there are concerns for a child's safety. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.13)
- In some extreme cases, when children have very complex care needs, a child may need to be restrained by mechanical or chemical means. Any use of such restraint should follow a rigorous assessment process and, as with any restraint, be necessary and proportionate. Whenever such restraint is planned, it should be identified within a broad-ranging, robust behaviour support plan that aims to bring about the circumstances when continued use of such restraint will no longer be required. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.45)
In particular, risk assess the use of safe-space beds and ensure that, when used, written permission for their use is gained from parents and the child's placing authority as appropriate.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children live in six new flats that accommodate between one to 10 children. The children enjoy higher-quality, more domestic-style accommodation than previously. The provider has continued to ensure that all of the specialist aids and adaptations that the children need are provided. A few children stay at the home for a short break. These breaks are well managed to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on other children. The staff have developed a 'bedroom in a box' of personal items for children who have short breaks, so that their rooms can be personalised with their belongings during their stays.

The planning arrangements and transitions are meticulous, whether this is in relation to moves within the home or for children who are new to the service. The staff use social stories and the children visit their new home a few times. This preparation ensures that the child and their family feel in control at every step of the way. Consequently, the children have settled well and continue to thrive. This good-quality planning has helped to settle anxious parents. A parent said, 'The move has been great. I have seen the biggest improvements. This home is the best for [my child].'

The home delivers individualised care that meets the children's complex needs. The competent staff want the best for the children and promote their health and well-being. The wealth of specialist professionals on-site ensures that the children can access the support that they need. Residential staff stay with the children throughout the school day. Because of these arrangements, the children maintain optimum health while

continuing their personal and academic development.

The staff nurture the children, showing them love and attention. The children trust and value the relationships that they have with the caring staff. The staff use their knowledge of the children's individual communication methods to enable the children to express themselves and make choices. A parent said, '[The staff] do a fantastic job. There are some wonderful staff who really take the time to explain things to [my child].'

The children are well stimulated. They enjoy messy play, arts and crafts, sensory time and walks into the local village. There has been great improvement over the last year or so in providing wider opportunities and experiences for the children. For example, the children have really enjoyed going to the Harry Potter studios, Legoland, the cinema and the Science Museum. A child said, 'I get to do lots of things here.'

Parents said that they are well supported to help ensure that their child remains central to the family. Parents value the daily 'FaceTime' video call so that they can keep in contact with their child. Parents greatly appreciate the ability to stay in on-site accommodation, which enables them to be near their child whenever they wish. Parents said that the staff are incredibly flexible and intuitive as to the family's and child's needs during these stays.

The children like living at the home. Non-verbal children showed their joy at coming back to the home when returning from staying with family, for example with smiles and happy screeches of general excitement. One of the children said, 'It's awesome. I just love it here. I like all the staff.'

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

There are some shortfalls relating to the help and protection of children. However, the impact of these shortfalls does not detract from children's experiences. The children feel safe. They demonstrated this through their affectionate interactions with staff. Families and professionals have absolute confidence in the staff to keep these highly vulnerable children safe. A parent said, 'I love that she's here [at the home]. I totally trust the staff.' Another parent said, 'We can see the smile beaming across his face when we bring him back. He is really happy.'

When potential concerns have arisen, the managers have acted robustly to ensure that the safety of the children remains paramount. The staff have received training in safeguarding and know that keeping children safe is their core duty. However, the training that they have received does not cover the needs of disabled children. Therefore, there is the potential for staff to miss issues that can increase disabled children's vulnerability.

Due to the complex needs of the children, monitoring equipment and environmental restraints are used. Audio and movement monitors are used in every bedroom without a review of the child's needs to understand whether this intrusion is necessary. Environmental restraints are used for many of the children. In most cases, their use is

included in the child's care plan and has been agreed by the parent. However, this is not the case in relation to safe-space beds, which a small number of children use. The use of these beds has not been risk assessed and there is no written permission from parents and placing authorities. There is no information to suggest that these beds are being used covertly or for reasons other than children's safety. However, it is essential that any such equipment is used only when it is formally agreed by all involved that the use is in the best interests of the child.

Fire prevention arrangements are appropriate. Each of the individual flats has effective fire doors and equipment. However, the records of fire drills are, on occasion, unclear as to whether the building was successfully evacuated, how quickly and by whom. There has not always been a review of the challenges when an evacuation has been unsuccessful. This means that opportunities to improve emergency evacuation plans have been missed. No night-time fire drill has been undertaken. This has the potential to undermine swift and effective evacuation in the event of a night-time emergency.

A small number of young adults live at the home with the children. These adults have complex needs and are unlikely to present a risk to the children. However, there is no documented consideration or risk assessment of any potential risk factors of adults sharing accommodation with children. It is unclear, therefore, whether all possible risks have been considered.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager and the senior leadership team aim to provide a child-centred service, and this ethos is threaded throughout the service. However, the manager has not maintained the previous level of oversight of some of the systems and required documentation.

The manager and staff work well in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure that the children's needs are well met. Consequently, the service is held in high esteem. A parent said, 'I am delighted with the care provided.'

The staff benefit from wide-ranging and useful training. This training helps them gain the proficiencies and confidence needed to carry out the highly skilled complex care tasks that they perform daily. However, some staff have not received the required training updates in physical intervention. Some staff's competency in managing medication and performing complex care tasks has not been reassessed to ensure that their knowledge and skills are adequate to meet children's needs.

Staff feel well supported and know what their responsibilities are. However, individual supervision arrangements are not sufficiently regular. One new probationary staff member has received only four supervisions within the nine months that they have been employed. Ineffective supervision arrangements have the potential to affect staff members' confidence and limit opportunities to ensure that new staff are working to the best of their ability.

The statement of purpose does not reflect the current management arrangements. This

means that parents, commissioners and other interested parties do not have access to accurate and current information.

The visits carried out by the independent visitor and the reports of these visits do not give a good sense of the quality of care and support that the children receive. The visitor has not regularly gained feedback from parents and professionals, nor have they stated their opinion of the quality of care and the effectiveness of safeguarding. This reduces the effectiveness of the information provided to the manager as a quality monitoring tool.

Although there are a few areas for development, there are also many strengths. The shortfalls identified do not negatively affect the children's enjoyment at their home, and the children continue to receive good-quality care and support.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1229766

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Aurora Care and Education Opco Limited

Registered provider address: 33 Holborn, London EC1N 2HT

Responsible individual: Fiona Voysey

Registered manager: Alison Brushett

Inspectors

Joanna Heller: social care inspector

Lynne Drage: social care inspector

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