

# SC030713

Registered provider: Wokingham Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is a resource centre for children with disabilities and their families and is owned and managed by the local district council. One of the services offered at the centre is residential short-break care for children with a disability. It is this aspect of the centre's activity that is regulated under the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. The centre is registered for five young people aged between eight and 17 who have a learning and/or physical disability and many of the children also present challenging behaviour. Other services offered include day care, after school care and outreach services.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 8 November 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 18 to 19 March 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 13 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
13/02/2018	Full	Outstanding
22/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
18/02/2016	Interim	Sustained 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
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>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. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(2)(c)(i))</p> <p>In particular, rectify water damage to a bathroom ceiling and upgrade items of worn furniture.</p>	<p>30/05/2019</p>

### Recommendations

- In some cases, such as in residential special schools that are also registered children’s homes or children’s homes caring for children with complex care needs, restraint may be necessary as a consequence of a child’s impairment or disability. A child’s EHC plan or statement of special educational needs may contain detail about planned and agreed approaches to restraint or restraint techniques to be applied in the day-to-day routine of the child. This could include, for example, the use of a device such as outlined in paragraph 9.46. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 47, paragraph 9.43)

In particular, seek written guidance in relation to the use of a weighted blanket.

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children with complex needs benefit hugely from using this service. The staff are warm and nurturing and know the children well. They work in partnership with the families and all professionals involved, which ensures that an excellent level of continuity and care is maintained. A social worker commented that, ‘Children attend for years and the service

is a significant part of their lives, where staff have watched and supported children through to their adolescence.' Staff place a strong emphasis on communication. For example, feelings symbols are accessible for children to use to indicate how they may feel. Therefore, children have a voice.

Children's introductions to the home are thoughtfully planned. There is a high level of support offered to families to help them prepare to access this service. Children are given gradual introductions to the home, with support from their families. This enables children to start to build relationships with staff before they attend independently. This excellent practice is also applied to prepare children for their transition to adult services.

Children have access to equipment, which includes soft play, arts and crafts, a swing, a trampoline and a sensory room. This creates an environment where the children are stimulated and able to play, to learn and to have fun. Activities have included one child being taken for a ride in a paddle boat and other children taking part in low ropes at a local activity centre, both of which the children thoroughly enjoyed. These experiences enrich children's lives.

Staff promote a culture which embraces the children's identity and diversity. Festivals such as Eid, Diwali and the Chinese New Year are celebrated. Staff use costumes, music, food and themed activities to bring these events to life. As a result, the children can learn about the world they live in and enjoy new cultural experiences.

Parents value this service, commending the quality of care. They speak warmly about the experiences offered, which enhance their children's lives. One parent commented, 'I can't praise them highly enough. [It is a] brilliant service. I don't know what I would do without it.' Another parent was grateful that their child enjoys activities that she does not do at home.

Staff have an excellent understanding of the children and are highly attuned to their needs. Care plans are comprehensive and set out the needs and character of each child. Staff deliver care that supports children to reach their goals.

Staff ensure that the home is warm and welcoming. Each bedroom is themed. Children always stay in the same bedroom and can personalise their bedroom with transitional items from home. Overall, the environment is well maintained. However, there is water damage to a bathroom ceiling, which has not been rectified, and some items of furniture are worn.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Staff have extensive knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. They are confident in what actions they should take and who to contact if they have a concern about a child's welfare. Safeguarding records are comprehensive and clear and detail action taken by staff. This includes taking appropriate action when they have noticed unexplained marks on a child. Staff are inquisitive and vigilant in their practice to safeguard these vulnerable children.

Staff promote communication. They go to great lengths to empower children with limited communication to express their views and bring about change. For example, one child was able to state how they felt when they had run out of their favourite crisps. This was treated as a complaint. Staff now ensure that these crisps are always available.

Referral and admission processes are effective. Careful matching ensures that highly vulnerable children are suitably placed. This excellent practice maximises children's experiences, helping them to feel safe and providing opportunities to develop new friendships.

Risk management processes are of the highest quality. Staff are attuned to children and can recognise subtle shifts in behaviour. They respond swiftly to help reduce anxiety and distress in children. Risk assessments are dynamic and purposeful, which helps staff to keep children safe.

There is a low level of restraint used. Senior staff quickly identify antecedents to behaviours and ensure that they are understood. This practice informs future strategies to minimise reoccurrence. A child uses a weighted blanket for sensory feedback. The registered manager did not have the referral from occupational therapy on file.

Children make good progress from their starting points. Well-planned programmes encourage children to participate and become more independent. As a result, some children now prepare snacks independently. Other children have improved their communication and self-help skills, which has had a positive impact on their behaviour.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The newly registered manager is suitably qualified and has extensive experience to bring to this role. He is committed to maintaining and enhancing standards of practice. His enthusiasm drives a culture which is vibrant, energetic and child-centred. High staffing levels enable the children to receive excellent support and valuable experiences.

Leaders and managers know the home's strengths and limitations. They have clear plans for continuous improvement. One improvement has empowered staff to develop and enhance their skill set. For example, link workers are dynamic, confident and take the lead in all aspects of care planning for their link children. This results in staff feeling valued and appreciated.

Staff report that they receive good-quality supervision and feel well supported. Excellent training ensures that staff have the necessary knowledge and breadth of skills to meet the children's diverse and complex needs. Staff retention is excellent, with opportunities for personal development being actively promoted.

The independent visitor plays an important role in monitoring and evaluating the service. Reports are comprehensive and provide excellent oversight and challenge. The manager is responsive and uses recommendations to inform and drive further improvements.

The registered manager is providing impressive leadership. He is ambitious and child-focused in his vision for the service. His management style has gained the support of the already established team, whose members are keen to be part of this developing service.

## **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:** SC030713

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Wokingham District Council

**Registered provider address:** PO Box 154, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1WN

**Responsible individual:** Jasmine Grimshaw

**Registered manager:** Anthony Waite

## Inspector

Joe Davys: social care inspector

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