

SC409506

Registered provider: Bedford Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home, which is run by the local authority, provides short breaks and respite care for up to six children with physical and/or learning disabilities and/or complex health needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2017.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 June 2021

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: 20 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2020	Full	Good
07/03/2019	Full	Good
26/09/2017	Full	Good
15/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have positive relationships with children. They know the children well and understand and meet their individual needs. Staff are nurturing and provide excellent care for children. Children feel well cared for and valued.

The manager and staff have built positive relationships with parents. The manager has facilitated virtual coffee mornings for children's families as a supportive network. Families feel confident in the care provided at the home, and they feel included at the home.

Some children have complex communication needs. The manager has ensured that children have various ways to express their emotions and views. This includes an interactive feelings tree. Children can push an electronic button to let staff know what emotion they are feeling. Children have access to an independent advocate who visits the home, virtually, each month. Ensuring that children have a way to communicate their feelings and needs helps them to feel heard and understood.

The manager has a robust system for oversight and auditing of medication. There is a clear system for staff to administer medication. This level of oversight has ensured that there are minimal medication errors. When medication errors have occurred, they have been dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Children all attend education placements that meet their specific needs. Staff help the children to work towards their education targets. The manager works closely with schools. Consequently, children have good education outcomes.

Staff encourage children to develop independent living skills. The staff help children to learn to prepare basic meals and develop important life skills at an appropriate level. Promoting independence skills means that children are prepared for when they move on from the home.

Transitions from the home are well planned. Key workers accompany children to visit their new respite provision. Staff help children to understand the transition through social stories and key work. Staff celebrate children's time at the home by having farewell parties with them. Gradual transitions give the children time to adjust to change. Celebrating with children means that they experience a positive ending.

The house is spacious and homely and benefits from a variety of communal rooms. There is a designated sensory room to help children soothe and calm. Children's bedrooms are themed with animated characters and are welcoming. The children benefit from a large garden, with specialist play equipment for them to enjoy.

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

The staff occasionally use low-level physical interventions, which are appropriate and proportionate. The manager monitors and reviews the records of every physical intervention to look for trends and patterns. This close monitoring means that the manager has good oversight and that physical interventions are used minimally.

Children have detailed and appropriate risk assessments. At every handover, staff go through the risk assessments for every child who is staying that day. This process refreshes staff's knowledge of how to manage risks safely.

The children's individual care plans include behaviour support guidance with strategies for staff to help children to safely manage their emotions. Staff understand how to support children and what children need to manage their feelings.

The manager has ensured that there are clear safeguarding protocols and procedures in place to guide staff. However, on one occasion staff did not follow the safeguarding policy or procedure. The staff did not immediately report a safeguarding concern about a child to the manager or social worker. This caused a delay for the manager and social worker to respond to the concern. Not reporting safeguarding concerns promptly can leave children vulnerable.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is very experienced. He has a level 5 diploma in management and has managed the home for nearly four years. The manager has high aspirations for children and is very nurturing. He models good, aspirational practice, and staff have the same approach. Staff benefit from the manager's experience and leadership.

The manager uses a range of monitoring tools to review the effectiveness of the home. He uses information from reviews to develop and implement an action plan. The manager continually makes improvements that benefit the children and enhance their stays.

Staff feel supported and have regular and effective supervision. They said that the management team operates an open-door policy and that they feel able to approach managers. Good supervision means that staff have relevant guidance and development opportunities.

The manager ensures that staff access specific training to enable them to meet the children's individual needs. Staff said that they have a good understanding of the children's needs because of the thorough training provided. New staff benefit from a varied and in-depth induction and feel appropriately informed.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff implement the home's safeguarding policy and procedure and report safeguarding concerns promptly.</p>	28 June 2021

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: SC409506

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bedford Borough Council

Registered provider address: Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP

Responsible individual: Martin Purbrick

Registered manager: Alexander Milligan

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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