

SC429702

Registered provider: The Ryes College Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It provides care for four children who have a combination of needs, including mood dysregulation disorder, attention deficit disorder and learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2012.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 30 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 December 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: 4 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2019	Full	Good
16/05/2018	Full	Good
19/04/2017	Full	Good
18/10/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children receive high levels of good-quality care. They have been supported to develop positive and trusting relationships with the staff. This care has provided them with consistency and stability and helped them to heal and recover from past trauma and early adversity.

The manager takes a thoughtful approach to children moving in and out of the home. She undertakes thorough group impact assessments to ensure that any risks to the children already living at the home are minimised. A detailed admission plan of visits enables children to settle well. When children leave the home, staff work sensitively to help them understand the reasons for their move and to equip them to move on. This ensures that children feel secure and can settle into their new homes quickly.

The staff take a multi-agency approach to care planning. They take children to their health appointments and access additional specialist support for children. However, the placing authority for one child has not provided a complete care plan. This reduces the staff's ability to develop a detailed holistic plan to meet all the child's individual needs.

Staff recognise the importance of children's education to their future life outcomes. They work closely with the children's schools to address potential barriers to learning. Staff provide additional support at school for two of the children, when necessary. They created positive activities for teaching staff to use when working with some of the children at the home. Consequently, children are now increasing their school attendance and attainment.

The children participate in varied and enriching activities that they enjoy. These include attending local youth clubs, swimming, visiting trampoline parks, trips to cinemas and going camping. These activities help them to have new experiences, grow in confidence and progress their social skills.

The staff support the children to have family time. Staff engage collaboratively and flexibly with the children's families to address any incidents as they arise. Consequently, the children maintain a positive sense of their identity and experience a unified approach from the adults around them.

Since the last visit, the manager has continued with the refurbishment plan for the home. She has overseen considerable redecoration to parts of the house. The house is now light and spacious with tastefully decorated communal areas and cosy personalised bedrooms. This makes for a homely and welcoming environment for the children.

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

Staff work well to manage the children's complex needs and, at times, serious risky behaviours. When physical interventions have been necessary, they have been proportionate, and the records are timely. However, staff do not always provide detailed accounts of the individual strategies used. This makes it difficult for the manager to fully review the effectiveness of practice.

The staff take a strong, proactive approach to managing unwanted behaviours. They do this by recognising positive achievements and acts of kindness. Individual incentive programmes encourage and reward acceptable behaviours. These approaches are effective in helping the children to make good choices and positive behaviour changes.

Staff use a restorative approach and have meaningful conversations with the children. This enables children to gain an understanding of how their own behaviours can affect those around them.

Risk assessments do not include full descriptions of the children's individual risks. They fail to include historic risks that have recurred while the children have been living at the home. In addition, there is limited detail of potential warning signs or triggers of behaviours that staff can look out for. Therefore, the staff may not be fully prepared to manage all the children's risky behaviours.

Risk-reduction strategies are general in nature. They do not provide enough detail of individualised de-escalation techniques or strategies that reflect personalised knowledge of the children. The plans are, therefore, limiting as a tool for guiding staff on understanding which strategies work best for each child.

The manager is proactive in sharing information with other professionals through regular partnership meetings. These meetings support emerging risks to be addressed quickly through agreed action plans. Such a coordinated approach increases children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has been in post since 2012. Her longevity at the home has established strong and stable leadership. She has embedded a clear theoretical model that is central to staff practice.

The manager uses regular team meetings as opportunities to reflect on latest research and evidence-based approaches. She supports and coaches the staff to use theories and research to critically evaluate the care provided at the home. This motivates the staff to continually improve their practice and have ambitious aspirations for the children.

The staff receive regular individual and group supervision to explore their individual practice and how they can work best as a team. The staff value the manager's

commitment, skills and knowledge. They feel well supported by her. This has created a stable team of staff who work together well.

The recording of information can be variable. Some of the records are handwritten in note format which makes them difficult to read and understand. Therefore, they are not clear enough for the children to understand their files or for the manager to keep a track of the actions taken.

The feedback from parents and professionals is overwhelmingly positive. They recognise the staff's commitment to take the time to understand the children's life histories and respond with empathy and sensitivity. They can see that the care children receive makes a positive difference to their lives.

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>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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children's risks are thoroughly explored and that risk assessments are up to date with relevant history. Additionally, ensure that they are sufficiently detailed so that staff understand the risks, potential warning signs and triggers of behaviours and the individual strategies to manage them.</p>	17 February 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint provide specific, personalised details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure. These records will enable the registered person and staff to review the use of restraint and identify effective practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should challenge (under regulation 5(c)) any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child and is legible. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC429702

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Ryes College Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Skyview Business Centre, 9 Church Field Road,
Sudbury CO10 2YA

Responsible individual: Jaya Wright

Registered manager: Sharon Broadley

Inspector

Leemya McKeown, Social Care Inspector

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