

SC067753

Registered provider: West Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and support for a maximum of 10 children with complex needs. The home can accommodate children with both physical and learning disabilities, some of whom may display challenging behaviour. The home provides permanent placements and short breaks.

The manager post has been vacant since March 2021.

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 29 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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: 25 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2017	Full	Good
27/02/2017	Full	Good
26/09/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/02/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the last full inspection, leaders and managers have transformed the service. The home and gardens have been completely refurbished to a very high standard. All the spaces have been specifically designed to meet the needs of the children living there. This includes having lots of dedicated areas where children can spend time doing the things they enjoy in safety.

The members of the dedicated staff team work hard to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. This process begins prior to them moving in. All children are carefully assessed to ensure that the staff can meet their individual needs. This includes spending time with them at home and working closely with their parents or carers. As a result, the children make exceptional progress.

Staff passionately believe that all children have a right to communicate. This includes helping them to find the best way to express their wishes and feelings. With the input of specialists, the staff develop and use a range of methods to give the children a voice. This means that the children can and do make decisions and choices about their lives as well as being helped to understand their daily routines.

Children are at the heart of how the service is delivered. Evenings and weekends are thoroughly and creatively planned to ensure that children have access to a wide range of activities. The staff routinely give children choices about what they would like to do. Staff are enthusiastic about children trying new things. Photo books, viewed on inspection, really capture these moments, and show the joy on the faces of the children benefiting from these experiences.

All children are supported to learn. For example, the staff go over and above what is expected and transport children who struggle, with moving from one setting to another, to get to school. Their patient and planned approach gives the children time to process a change to their daily routine. As a result, children experience continuity and smoother transitions.

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

Leaders and managers have created a culture where children's safety and well-being come first. All staff are trained in safeguarding, and they have a good understanding of how the children recognise and manage risk. The high level of staffing means that the children always have one-to-one attention. As a result, the children get to take part in challenging activities and experiences.

Staff show genuine concern about children who exhibit self-injurious behaviour. Their approach, which at times has included physical intervention, is kept under constant

review. Their unrelenting inquisitiveness about the meaning behind these complex behaviours results in the children getting the right support. This includes working with the wider network to agree strategies and pushing for more specialist advice.

Children's complex health needs are very well managed. Comprehensive training, competency checks, clear procedures and detailed plans help to guide the staff's approach. The process for managing the administration of medication is also thorough and monitored closely. These things combined help to keep the children safe.

Children experience a high level of care and support. The staff continually go above and beyond what is expected of them when children are unwell, for example working flexibly when children are admitted to hospital and continuing to provide care and support during outbreaks of positive cases of COVID-19 in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is currently no registered manager in the home. However, the manager is in the process of applying to Ofsted for registration. The manager has a clear vision for the home which includes developing the service further to offer regular short breaks to children. The plans in place to do this are fully supported by senior leaders and are being implemented slowly to minimise the impact on the children living in the home. New staff are also being recruited to ensure that the current high levels of staffing are maintained.

The arrangements for monitoring the quality of care are effective. This includes using the recommendations from the regulation 44 reports to improve practice. Senior staff are also given lead areas of responsibility to manage, which helps to ensure the children receive high standards of care. As a result, the manager is well informed, responsive and has good oversight and scrutiny of the home.

The manager has created a culture where all staff are supported to develop both personally and professionally. They have access to a wide range of training, qualifications and specialists. This enables them to respond to the emerging needs of the children and help to manage them appropriately.

However, staff appraisals are overdue. Wider organisational plans to incorporate these into supervision meetings have not yet taken place. Minutes of supervision meetings evidence that these take place regularly and that staff are given the opportunity to reflect on practice. However, they do not have clear actions and outcomes either. This is a missed opportunity to review staff's performance formally and hold them to account.

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees—undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	30 June 2022

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: SC067753

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: West Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, West Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RG

Responsible individual: Julian Skeates

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Amanda Harvey, Social Care Inspector

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