

1244426

Registered provider: Oxfordshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority. It cares for up to six children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides short-term care and accommodation on a shared-care basis for a period of assessment.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2017. The registered manager was not available during this inspection which was supported by the assistant manager and responsible individual.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 November 2022

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2021	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Good
13/03/2019	Full	Good
06/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff work in partnership with a range of professionals to meet the needs of children. Staff provide care that is individualised. They support children's progress and development. Staff are child-centred and work towards the best possible outcomes for children.

There are strong relationships between staff and a range of professionals and parents. There is a clear commitment to working together to meet the varied and diverse needs of the children. Relationships between staff and children continue to progress. Warm trusting relationships are clear. One child who has had a particularly challenging period has become more settled. They have now started to engage in important one-to-one sessions.

Staff make health appointments, and support children to attend. Staff support children to make healthy meal choices. Fresh fruit and vegetables are readily available. Children have opportunities to play sport and keep fit and healthy. The home funds access to the local gym. Staff are aware of the emotional and psychological needs of children and work to meet these. Clinical involvement means a focus on all areas of children's needs.

Staff recognise the importance of education and promote this. All children are in education except one. This child has not attended school for some time. This is being addressed with virtual schools. Staff work to occupy and stimulate this child with a range of educational activities.

There is an open culture where children feel safe to share their views and to raise concerns. Staff understand the views of the children, which they gain in several ways. For example, regular one-to-one sessions provide opportunities for children to give their views. They make suggestions about plans for the home. Staff encourage children to attend meetings about their care. This means that they can give their views and express their wishes.

Children have positive experiences in this home. Staff have cooking and baking sessions with children. The sessions are relaxed and provide another opportunity for building good relationships. Children have access to a pool table and board games. But they eagerly await the completion of their new games room. Children take part in the interview process of new staff. This helps them to feel engaged with the home and to know that their views have value.

Staff help children to prepare for their futures. Children have responsibility for maintaining their rooms. They manage their laundry and with support cook healthy meals. One child is preparing for independence. Because of this they can have longer periods away from the home and with their social group.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Clear plans are in place for the care of children. Children take part in plans for their care and their voice has value. Staff know the plans, but they are not always followed. On one occasion a child's missing from care plan was not followed and this put the child at risk.

Some staff do not always know how to manage children's behaviour. They are not clear about when to get the support of management. On one occasion staff enlisted the support of the police to manage a child's behaviour. The expectation was for them to consult with a manager first. On another occasion staff sent a notification to Ofsted following a physical intervention. Staff had not consulted with management. They will have been advised that this was not notifiable.

Risk assessments are in place and staff know the safety needs of the children. Staff review risk assessments. This is to ensure that the most up to date information is available. Staff work with children about how to keep themselves safe. Staff have one-to-one sessions with children. This helps them to understand risks associated with social media. Additionally, the importance of online safety.

Boundaries help the children to know expectations of them around their behaviour. Staff involve children in plans to support their behaviour. Because of this, children are responsive. Staff work with parents to ensure the safety of their children. For example, one parent keeps regular contact with staff when their child is missing. They send locators so that their child can be retrieved. Staff have worked extensively with a child around the management of their phone and when it can be used.

Strong recruitment processes are in place. This prevents unsuitable people from working with the children in this home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was not available for this inspection. The assistant manager and service manager supported the inspection.

Leaders and managers have high expectations for what children can achieve. They promote a good standard of care and support staff to work at the child's pace. Managers work with a range of professionals to promote positive outcomes for children. Managers take effective action when the responses from other services do not meet the needs of the children. Managers know the progress that children make.

Leaders and managers provide a supportive environment for staff. The quality of supervision is good, and sessions support a reflective space for staff. There is a continuous review of learning and development. Training is of a good standard and meets the needs of the children that they care for. Staff receive detailed induction and a period of structured probation.

Leaders and managers encourage the views and participation of children. Children take part in the plans for redecoration and updating of the home. They have personalised their own space and give their views in house meetings. This helps children to feel invested in the home despite the brief period that they are there.

The home is achieving its aims and objectives. Staff assess children who return to their families. Others move on to alternative suitable living situations such as foster care.

Leaders and managers know the strengths of the home and areas for development. They have improved the recruitment of staff. They also have a rolling process of advertising and interviewing. As a result, there has been an improvement in staff morale.

Leaders and managers work together to promote equality and diversity. They celebrate difference and acknowledge religious festivals. They support children to learn about them and meet dietary needs.

Leaders and managers have responded to the recommendation made at the last inspection. But they have not completed an annual review of the quality of care. This is a missed opportunity to show the progress that is being made. Also, leaders and managers have not ensured that Ofsted receive an up-to-date version of their statement of purpose.

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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</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)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that staff follow the child's agreed reporting plans when they are missing.</p>	30/01/2023
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p>	30/01/2023

<p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p> <p>This specifically relates to staff understanding when to request police involvement; consulting senior management when making a notification and understanding the policy around when a notification is required.</p>	
<p>The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and 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>	<p>30/01/2023</p>
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p>	<p>30/01/2023</p>

<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and</p> <p>make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p>	
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 1244426

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, OXFORD, Oxfordshire OX1 1ND

Responsible individual: Sarah Duerden

Registered manager: Sandra Curley

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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