

1276719

Registered provider: Devon and Cornwall Autistic Community Trust (t/a Spectrum)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a provider of education and social care.

The provider states in the statement of purpose that this home provides long-term placements for up to three children aged between 11 and 18 years. These children may have autism spectrum disorder or associated conditions.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home.

There is a new manager in post.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 2023

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 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/05/2021	Full	Good
14/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/03/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

From the child's starting point, considerable progress has been made. A specific care approach has helped the child to improve their emotional and behavioural responses. While some behaviours continue to negatively affect the child's health, the use of a feeding tube to ensure that the child has sufficient nutrition is now rarely necessary.

The child accepts the care provided to them, which drives the child's progress and enables them to enjoy new experiences. These include activities in the community, which are captured in photos for the child. The child has developed trusting relationships with the adults who care for them.

The child is now able to tolerate furnishings in the home, which has led to an improved home environment. The child is involved with the home's decoration, and their bedroom is personalised to reflect their interests. Some areas, including the outside area, require care and attention. Internet and Wi-Fi connections in one room generate heat and noise that are not conducive to a home environment.

Staff receive bespoke training to meet the child's specific needs. This includes training in medical interventions. On two occasions, when procedures have not been followed, errors have occurred. Managers have responded promptly, and appropriate actions have been taken to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

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

Staff care for the child in line with specialist advice and training. This has improved their responses to manage the child's behaviour and helped the child to develop their feelings of safety. A sustained reduction in incidents has been achieved.

Staff provide the child with appropriate boundaries. They communicate clearly with the child to de-escalate incidents. Restrictive practice to manage the child's behaviour has reduced. On two occasions, restraint has been used effectively in the community to reduce the risk of harm. Following the use of restraint, debriefs with the child and staff are not recorded to ensure that alternative strategies are considered.

Managers are informed about safe recruitment procedures. System changes in the organisation have not efficiently transferred all information relating to recruitment and training records. On one occasion, the verification of references for one staff member could not be located. All other records sampled by the inspector demonstrate that careful recruitment procedures are in place.

The child's plan is very detailed. It provides a good understanding of the child's life story, but it is not an effective tool to provide guidance to staff on the child's daily

needs. Individual protocols have been created. They are succinct and provide clear guidance to staff to ensure that calm, positive and consistent approaches are used.

The child does not go missing from the home. They have limited understanding of risk and always need the support of an adult in the community. Appropriate staffing arrangements are in place to ensure that the child is always supported, and appropriate barriers are put in place at night.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a well-established management team in the home. The new responsible individual previously managed the home. The new manager worked in the home for almost two years prior to their management role. They are passionate about their role and responsibilities to drive high-quality care. Due to different reasons, a required qualification is due to be completed outside of the designated time frame.

The positive care provided at this home has been recognised through a recent national award for children and young people. During this inspection, the child's social worker provided positive feedback about the child's care and progress since living in the home.

There is regular and effective communication between the home and professionals to ensure that the child's needs are met. Since the previous inspection, one complaint has been recorded, which has been shared with relevant professionals. However, the home's actions in response to this complaint are not comprehensive.

The home is appropriately staffed in line with the child's level of need. Staff provided positive feedback to the inspector about their experiences of working in the home. They receive high-quality supervision from the manager. On occasion, the same bank staff are used to provide care. They do not receive supervision from the home's managers to ensure that there is clear oversight of the care they provide.

The home's statement of purpose needs updating. This is to ensure that it reflects practice in the home, including the frequency of supervision.

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 registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	4 April 2023
<p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))</p>	4 April 2023

In particular, the manager must ensure that they complete the required qualifications for their role without further delay.	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose accurately reflects the arrangements for professional supervision for all staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.10)

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: 1276719

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Devon and Cornwall Autistic Community Trust (t/a Spectrum)

Registered provider address: Lakeside Offices, The Old Cattle Market, Porthleven Road, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0SR

Responsible individual: Wendy Burgess

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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M1 2WD

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