

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 physical and learning disabilities. The home provides permanent placements and short breaks for children.

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2023

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

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

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: 22 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2022	Full	Outstanding
25/09/2017	Full	Good
27/02/2017	Full	Good
26/09/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

This purpose-designed building comprises of two separate dwellings, each with their own personalised entrances. This means that children living in the home are not disturbed or distracted by children visiting for short breaks. This clever design, along with the awareness of staff, helps children to feel a great sense of belonging.

Children thrive and flourish because of their nurturing relationships with staff. Staff speak passionately about the children that they care for, and their aspirations for them. There is a genuine sense of love and acceptance. Staff proudly show off photographs and recite memories of children's achievements and significant milestones.

Staff's excellent partnership working with education, health and therapy professionals means that children make exceptional progress from their starting points and achieve remarkable outcomes.

Staff expertly promote choice for each individual child and understand the specific ways each child communicates. Children feel happy and confident in sharing their views, and staff respond to their choices and requests extremely well. This means that children with complex communication difficulties have a voice and contribute to all aspects of their daily lives.

Staff are extremely patient and supportive. They help children to reach their goals and gain new skills. Staff have a strong focus on developing children's independence. Consequently, children learn to do things for themselves and their confidence and self-esteem blossom.

Staff understand the importance of family and friends, and actively encourage children to safely spend time with the people who are important to them. This support is offered sensitively, and at a pace suited to the children's needs. One social worker explained, 'Staff help [the child] stay connected with their friends.'

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

Staff demonstrate an exceptional commitment to helping children to understand (and cope with) their emotions when they find situations difficult. For example, staff creatively support children to better express themselves using symbols when they are unhappy or in discomfort. For some children, this has drastically reduced the number of times that they harm themselves.

Staff have developed research-informed safety management plans for children. These plans encourage staff to think about children's wider sensory needs, including

the impact of different lighting, temperature and noise. Consequently, children are quickly soothed and have their needs met in a consistent, familiar way. As a result, staff rarely need to use physical interventions with children.

The manager carefully assesses staffing levels, taking into consideration the needs and vulnerabilities of children. Children take full advantage of this and enthusiastically request impromptu outings like evening walks on the beachfront. These opportunities enrich children's lives and further strengthen the relationships that they have with staff.

Staff support for children's health needs is excellent and significantly improves children's well-being. Staff administer children's medication in a safe and appropriate manner. When medication discrepancies are found, there are good systems in place to review staff training and competencies. Furthermore, staff challenge other professionals when their practices could be improved.

The manager ensures that staff are safely recruited and have the skills that they need to offer high-quality care to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager in the home has applied to be registered with Ofsted. Staff say that she is approachable, knowledgeable and puts children at the centre of her practice.

The manager is clear on the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has devised a plan to further review and develop the service. This demonstrates her commitment to continual growth to benefit children, parents and the staff team.

The manager has a clear vision. She empowers staff and supports them to improve their skills. This means that children are supported by a skilled workforce.

The manager took immediate action following the last inspection to improve annual appraisal practices for staff. Supervising staff have received suitable appraisal training and the template to review staff performance has been revised. This is in the early stages of becoming embedded into practice. The inspector found appraisals were useful and of an improving quality because of the new training for supervisors. As a result, the previous requirement has been met.

The responsible individual is providing regular supervision to the manager. Staff are unanimously positive about the support that the responsible individual provides. The responsible individual reflects on children's progress and how staff can help children to continue to succeed.

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

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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