

SC036740

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict children's liberty.

The home can accommodate up to 20 children aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides accommodation for up to 12 children placed by the Youth Custody Service and has up to eight places for children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Twelve children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Education is provided on site.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2018.

Inspection date: 28 February 2023

Date of last inspection: 19 July 2022

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children spoke positively about their experiences at this home. They enjoy trusting relationships with staff who are responsive to their individual needs. This was evident throughout the inspection. It was a pleasure to see children and staff spending time together and having fun.

Children benefit from a multidisciplinary-informed package of care. This is individually tailored to their needs and captured in plans that are reviewed regularly by care, education and health professionals. Staff know the children well and are good at adapting their approach as needs and behaviours change. This is done in the context of good routines that promote social, emotional and educational growth.

Planning for resettlement starts at the point of admission. Staff work hard to ensure that exit plans are in place early to enable good transition planning. Managers and staff advocate strongly on behalf of children and will challenge local authorities when this is not the case.

The safety of children

Children's safety is given a high priority. Known behaviours and risks are clearly identified in multidisciplinary-informed plans. These are understood and implemented effectively by staff. This means that children are safeguarded when displaying behaviours such as self-harm.

Managers take a multi-agency approach when managing safeguarding concerns and allegations. They quickly share information with the relevant people and take suitable steps to manage or remove the immediate risk. This ensures that children and staff are protected while investigations are ongoing.

Measures of control such as managing children away from the group, restricting them to their rooms and physical restraint are used proportionately and as a last resort. Records relating to children being restricted to their rooms have been improved. However, a few of the records sampled did not clearly identify the reason for this measure or evidence what action staff had taken to reintegrate the child back into the group.

Restraint practice is highly scrutinised by managers, using CCTV. This monitoring is used well to identify and address any areas for improvement. Incidents reviewed during this inspection showed staff taking a patient and supportive approach, with holds of short duration.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The registered manager is supported well by a team of senior leaders and managers who promote a cohesive approach to care planning. Collectively, they demonstrate a good understanding of the home's strengths, while taking a lessons learned approach to improving quality of care.

Staff are positive about their work and demonstrate a warm and caring attitude towards the children. This was seen throughout the inspection, in particular when supporting children who required high levels of support to keep them safe.

Formal, practice-based supervision is used effectively to support the development of staff. This is further strengthened by the delivery of mandatory and needs-led training that ensures staff are knowledgeable in their roles.

Managers make good use of internal and external quality assurance processes to review and improve quality of care. This includes addressing the requirement and recommendations from the previous inspection.

Shortfalls from the previous inspection relating to education have not been reviewed at this inspection and will be considered at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/07/2022	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/06/2021	Full	Good
01/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

What does the secure children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the records relating to children being restricted to their rooms clearly identify the reason for this measure, and evidence what action staff have taken to end this measure and reintegrate the child to the group. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.65)
- The registered person should ensure that, for children who have experienced severe trauma, have mental health difficulties or have been excluded or are out of education for significant periods, there is support to address and work through their past experiences and present needs to be able to positively participate in learning activities and formal education. In particular, leaders need to improve their support for children's learning in the classroom, making sure that all teachers and support assistants make swift interventions to minimise the lesson disruption. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the progress in education can be measured and evidenced in various ways, including but not limited to: success in academic, vocational and other awards and qualifications; other formal attainment tests that are part of national assessment arrangements; and teachers' ongoing assessments. Assessment of progress should include qualitative information such as how well the child is being prepared for their next stage of education, training or employment, and quantitative data where available. In particular, leaders should support the sharing of good practice in the development of learning resources between subject areas, so that children can produce high-quality evidence of their learning across the curriculum. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.2)

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC036740

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Registered provider address: Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall,
Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

Responsible individual: Devon Allen

Registered manager: Paul Thomas

Inspectors

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector
Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector

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