

# SC030713

Registered provider: Wokingham Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is a resource centre for children with disabilities and their families. It is owned and managed by the local district council. The home's statement of purpose states the home is registered for five children aged between eight and 17 with learning and/or physical disabilities.

The registered manager left in July 2022 and a new manager was appointed in September 2022.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 March 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected      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:** 30 June 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
30/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
10/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
18/03/2019	Full	Outstanding
13/02/2018	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

This home currently supports seven children at different times to have overnight stays. Other children visit after school and enjoy a meal with friends and staff. Some of these children are working towards their first overnight stay in the home.

Staff know the children well. This is seen through children's smiles and positive interactions. Staff are acutely aware of changes in children's body language and facial expressions and use this knowledge in offering additional guidance and reassurance. These good-quality and purposeful relationships mean children feel happy and relaxed when they are staying at this home.

The new manager has reviewed the requirements and recommendations from the last full inspection. As a result, she and the staff team have made the home more accessible to children who use wheelchairs. This is promoting children's independence and means all children can make good use of the resources and facilities when they visit.

The staff and the manager recognise the value of education and provide effective support for children to attend school regularly. They liaise with school staff to gain and share practice and strategies to meet children's specific needs to promote their growth and development.

Communication symbols are available to children and staff. The home provides an assortment of different symbols and aids to meet a variety of requests, likes and interests. However, the inspector did not see these being used by staff in practice. This is a missed opportunity for staff to demonstrate how children are consulted with about their activities and their daily routines.

Staff have created detailed plans that identify and address children's very individual and complex needs. They demonstrate in practice their knowledge and understanding of children's relevant plans and any updates. However, this is not reflected in all aspects of record-keeping. For example, some information recorded for children is duplicated across different records. This has the potential to confuse staff and lead to inconsistent practices across the staff team.

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

Managers monitor staff training well. Staff say the quality of training is good and they can request and receive additional training to meet children's needs. Individual staff are trained in specific health tasks for children, and the manager has researched and sourced additional training to strengthen the culture and the staff awareness of children's risks and vulnerabilities. This approach to training means children are supported by a skilled and informed workforce.

Staff administer children's medication in a safe and appropriate manner. Systems in place to review staff training and competencies are strong. Staff are clear on what to do if they have a medication concern. When errors do occur, the manager sensitively carries out a thorough investigation, to support and develop staff learning. As a result, medication errors in the home are low.

Staff record physical interventions and restraints well. Staff strategies mirror those used effectively in education provisions and plans clearly describe proactive steps in helping children to feel better. This way of working means children have consistent and familiar support across the different places they visit.

The manager has good oversight of staff recruitment checks. She has a clear understanding of safer recruitment practices and has audited all staff files since working in the home.

Since the last full inspection, senior leaders have commissioned a new fire risk assessment. This identifies risks associated with the structural layout of the building. The new assessment has significantly impacted the number of children who can stay overnight at one time and the number of staff needed to safely evacuate children. The new manager has worked tirelessly in making fire safety a priority and is demonstrating this through a comprehensive and well-reviewed action plan. Children's personal evacuation plans have been revised. All staff, including night staff, are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in evacuating children from the building.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Since the last full inspection, a new manager has started work in the home. She has applied to register with Ofsted. She has worked hard in building positive relationships with children and staff, which is reflected in what staff, other professionals and parents say about her. Staff welcome her leadership and the change and challenge this is bringing.

Allocated social workers speak positively about how the manager and staff communicate with them. They say they are kept up to date on a regular basis and are informed of any significant incidents immediately. They spoke highly of how staff work together and in a joined-up way with education and social care to help the children achieve their goals and targets.

The manager's monitoring of children's health and well-being when they stay in the home is good and promotes positive outcomes for children. For one child, this has significantly changed how often they take their prescribed medication. A health professional said, 'Staff respond well, promptly and immediately with communication.'

The responsible individual for this home is the local authority's corporate parenting service manager for children. A team manager from the organisation supervises the

home's manager and visits regularly. They carry out monitoring responsibilities and this information feeds through to another manager before it reaches the responsible individual. Although this has not impacted on the quality of the care children receive, it has the potential to hinder direct information-sharing and means the responsible individual is not visible in the home or directly known to children or staff.

Supervisions are regular and enable staff to reflect on the support they provide to children. There is a focus on training and professional development. However, previous actions are not regularly reviewed, and managers do not receive appraisal training. This is evident in the quality of appraisals for staff. Staff performance has not been thoroughly appraised throughout the year and there have been missed opportunities to document how staff are supported to improve their performance and reach their full potential.

## 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child and;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(c)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure children’s relevant plans are reviewed regularly and contain the most up-to-date information.</p>	1 June 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(c))</p>	1 June 2023

## Recommendations

- The registered person should consider appointing a responsible individual who can demonstrate effective supervision of the management of the home. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 59, paragraph 12.4)
- The registered person should ensure staff use children’s communication aids effectively, in accordance with their relevant plans, when they visit. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.6)

## **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:** SC030713

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Wokingham Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End,  
Wokingham RG40 1BN

**Responsible individual:** Jasmine Grimshaw

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector



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