

# SC039900

Registered provider: Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to seven children with learning and physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2009.

### Inspection dates: 2 and 3 August 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:** 22 November 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2022	Full	Good
14/09/2021	Full	Good
19/11/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/10/2018	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

There are four children living in the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home and another has moved out. Staff ensure that children leaving or moving into the home are helped in a planned and sensitive way. As a result, children settle into the home quickly.

Children are encouraged to have their say by using their preferred methods of communication. For example, one child has a resource pack containing communication aids that help him to share his wishes and feelings. Staff know the children well and can interpret children's vocal tones, facial expressions, signs and vocal language. As a result, staff can act on children's wishes and feelings effectively.

Children enjoy living at the home. Staff ensure that children have access to a range of activities in and out of the home. At the time of the inspection, staff said that two children were currently enjoying a holiday, and other children were expected to go on holiday at the end of the month.

Children's physical, emotional and mental health are well maintained. Staff ensure that children access their routine health appointments, eat healthily and attend specialist health appointments. As a result, children are fit and well.

Before living at the home, one child experienced barriers to education that impacted on his learning experience. Since living at the home, managers and staff have worked well in partnership with schools to help the child access education that suits his needs. An extract from the child's school information read:

'Since being at the home, school have noticed a change in behaviour, [name of child] is more settled. Previously, school did not think they could meet the child's needs. Now the child looks forward to going to school, and school have commented positively about the progress he is making.'

Advocates visit children to ensure that their voice is heard. There is a children's guide that also provides information about how to raise concerns and who to report these to. This ensures that children are heard when they are unhappy with the service. Children have not raised any complaints about the home.

Children have regular visits with their family. Staff work in partnership with family members to ensure that children stay connected. A parent said:

'I visit him every week. Since the last inspection, I have noticed how much more he is talking. Staff keep me informed, they always attend meetings with me or on my behalf if I am unable to go due to my health.'

The home is warm, welcoming and is kept to a good standard. Children have lots of space to spend time together or alone where they can enjoy their chosen activities.

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

Staff understand children's complex needs. They are successful in using distraction and redirection strategies to challenge unwanted or self-harming behaviour. As a result, children feel safe and are protected from harm.

Children benefit from appropriate staffing levels. Staff are skilled in and knowledgeable about how to keep children safe. Assessments for children moving into the home are good. This means that children have positive experiences with each other despite the challenges they face. As a result, children do not need to be restrained.

Positive behaviour is promoted. Relationships between children, each other and staff are joyful and respectful. Staff celebrate children's achievements and provide them with certificates, which are displayed to acknowledge the progress they have made. This encourages children to do well.

Children are protected and kept safe from going missing. The manager ensures that each child has the required number of staff to meet their individual needs. As a result, children do not go missing from the home.

Children with complex health needs are protected from the risk of harm at night. For example, staff use a visual monitoring device for a child with epilepsy. This ensures that staff are alert to any seizures that compromise the child's health and safety.

Health and safety procedures, including fire arrangements, are safe. Fire equipment is checked, and tests are carried out regularly. Staff and children also practise fire evacuations. Children have personal evacuation plans to help staff understand what level of support they require to evacuate safely. This keeps all those living, working or visiting the home safe in the event of a fire.

Recruitment is safe. The manager ensures that all applicants are subject to thorough recruitment checks before they begin working in the home. This keeps children safe from unsuitable people having access to them.

The registered manager has not ensured that the arrangements to administer medication are safe. For example, one bottle of medicine for a child did not have clear dispensing instructions on it, and another did not have any label on it at all. This makes it difficult to identify who the medicine is for and what dose is required. This means that staff are unable to safely administer medication. The manager was unaware of this shortfall and took immediate action to rectify this at the time of the inspection.

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

The home is managed by a long-standing, experienced registered manager. He is suitably qualified in the management and care of children in residential care. The registered manager is dedicated, motivated and passionate in delivering good-quality care for children.

The manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the service. He has taken action to meet the two requirements and four recommendations from the previous inspection. The manager monitors each child's journey and keeps track of their progress.

Managers are active and available in the home. As a result, they know the children well. During staff meetings, staff discuss the children's wishes and feelings. This feedback from children helps to shape the home they live in and contributes to their overall experiences and progress.

The manager ensures that all permanent staff receive regular supervision and have an annual appraisal. However, non-permanent staff have not yet received any supervision. This means that not all staff receive feedback about their practice or need for additional support or training.

Staff feel supported by the management team, including the responsible individual. A staff member told the inspector that they receive good support and all work closely together. If staff have any problems, they can always talk to their managers. This promotes healthy working relationships.

Partnership working is a real strength. The managers and staff work well together and share information with parents, social workers and schools. This improves children's experiences and development.

## 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 make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home.</p> <p>In particular the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that all medication is labelled.</p>	<p>6 October 2023</p>

### Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all non-permanent staff receive supervision of their practice which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to them. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.2)

### 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:** SC039900

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

**Registered provider address:** Council House, Priory Road, Dudley DY1 1HF

**Responsible individual:** Sivay Heer

**Registered manager:** Mark Bates

## Inspector

Michelle Spruce, Social Care Inspector

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