

# 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. The home can accommodate children with physical and learning disabilities. The home provides permanent placements and short breaks for children.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living in the home and two children were using the short-breaks service.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024 and is suitably qualified.

### Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2025

**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:** 16 July 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2024	Full	Good
03/01/2024	Full	Good
31/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
22/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

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

Children receive care from supportive, experienced and highly skilled staff who know them well. They show a strong commitment to providing the best possible care to children. They recognise the individuality of each child and support their uniqueness.

Children make good progress in all areas of their life. This includes their health and education as well as their social, emotional and psychological well-being. Staff are alert to the complex health needs of some of the children. They work in partnership with a large professional group to ensure that children's health needs are well met. Staff access specialist services as needed. For example, staff identified a specialist dentist to fit braces for a child. Staff receive specialist training that is relevant to the health needs of the children. The staff know what they need to do to ensure that children keep healthy. This includes promoting a healthy diet and ensuring that children have a good variety of choice.

All the children attend school. Staff have regular communication with school professionals. This is to ensure that they are aware of the children's experiences and how they can support them to make progress. Staff observe children in school. They offer teaching staff opportunities to see how they work with the children in the home. This helps to ensure a consistent approach in working with the children.

Staff develop close, supportive relationships with the children. They know them well. As a result, the children trust them. The skilled and thorough support of staff has helped one child to significantly improve their ability to communicate their needs. Staff use communication aids and resources that enable the children to express themselves in a positive way. For example, one child can now use artificial intelligence technology to make choices around the music that they listen to. This helps them to regulate their emotions.

Strong processes are in place for gathering children's views. This is evident throughout their experience of living here. Where possible, staff consult with children on decisions that affect them. The staff recognise the importance and value of children's involvement in the plans about them. Because of this, the children grow in confidence. Staff support children to have time with their family. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the relationship of one child with their parent.

Staff ensure that children have meaningful social experiences. These include involvement in the wider community. Additionally, children take part in activities related to annual national charity events. A strength of the home is the staff's ability to document the experiences that children have. This helps to build lifelong memories.

There is thorough planning when children move into and out of the home. Staff use social stories to prepare the children already living in the home. Staff support new

children to personalise their bedroom and make it their space. Because of this, children's rooms reflect their personality and character. The process of a new child accessing short breaks was extremely well managed. The move happened at the child's pace. There was effective working between staff and the parents. As a result, this child has settled well and is making progress.

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

Staff provide children with a home that helps them to feel safe, secure and well cared for. The children have trusted adults to go to with worries or concerns. They use their communication aids and speech to express this, confident in the knowledge that they will receive the help and support that they need.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how to manage and respond to risk. They ensure that each child has a detailed risk management plan that is specific to their needs. Staff are responsive to children's risks and work to keep children safe. For example, staff involved a parent in the planning for their child's bedroom and how to make it safer before the child moved in. This helped to create a warm and safe environment where the child could express and be themselves safely.

Staff work with children to help them understand how to stay safe. They do this through one-to-one work and the use of social stories and communication aids. This ensures that children have opportunities to learn about safety in a way that they understand and is meaningful.

Staff receive training around the management of behaviours. They use physical interventions only as a last resort to keep the child and others safe. Positive behaviour support plans are in place. Staff follow these plans closely to ensure that children remain safe.

Safeguarding arrangements are strong. There are effective and well-considered responses to safeguarding incidents. Since the last inspection, the manager commissioned the local authority designated officer to deliver bespoke training to staff around safeguarding children and managing allegations. As a result, staff have an improved understanding of safeguarding children.

There has been an improvement in safer recruitment practices since the last inspection. Leaders and managers understand and apply these practices well. This ensures that only appropriately vetted individuals work at the home.

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

The manager has high expectations of what children can achieve. He ensures good standards of care for all the children, which is specific to them. The manager has a secure understanding of the progress that children make. He ensures that opportunities are in place to enable children to make progress.

The manager acts as necessary to ensure that children can make progress in all areas of their life. The use of monthly reports helps them to keep abreast of the progress that children make. He ensures that children have the same opportunities as any other child. This includes a recent trip abroad for some children. This was highly successful and pushed the boundaries.

Generally, there is a supportive environment in place for staff. They receive regular supervision and appraisals. Training is provided as appropriate. Team meetings provide a space for sharing of information and reflection. However, some staff do not feel supported as they do not feel recognised for the work that they do. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to build on the positive work since the last inspection.

The manager understands the strengths of the home. While he shows a commitment to reviewing the quality of care, he has not involved children, staff or external professionals in the process.

The manager has good professional relationships and works tirelessly to maintain these. This has a positive effect on the care and support that children receive.

There is a commitment to inclusion, and this is evident throughout the home. Leaders, managers and staff work to ensure that all the children can access the activities that their peers access. Children have opportunities for consultation and participation. They are very much part of the service.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that reviews of the quality of care that children receive include the views of children, parents, staff and professionals from children's placing local authorities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should be visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and/or management responsibilities. In particular, communication with staff should be effective to enable them to feel valued. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7)

## **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 address:** County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RG

**Responsible individual:** Hayley Grover

**Registered manager:** Luke Stevens

## Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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