

SC405933

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority and provides short breaks for children with sensory impairment, learning disabilities and physical disabilities. Twenty-seven children are currently registered to use the short-breaks service and up to six children can use the service at any one time.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 12 May 2014.

Inspection dates: 31 May and 1 June 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: 12 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/04/2022	Full	Good
13/07/2021	Full	Outstanding
29/08/2019	Full	Good
23/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by staff who are child-focused. Staff receive training specific to the needs of the children and staff consult regularly with parents. Consequently, children are cared for by staff who have a good understanding of how to meet their needs.

Children make good progress from their starting points. They have developed their independence skills in different areas. For example, children who required support at mealtimes are now able to feed themselves with minimal support. Staff work in partnership with health and education professionals to meet the children's needs. They attend review meetings at schools, provide support with transporting children to school at times and share information with relevant professionals. This ensures consistency in the care that children receive across the different settings.

Staff know the children well and recognise progress for each child in line with their individual capabilities. A range of communication methods are used by staff to capture the wishes and views of children. Consequently, children feel listened to.

There are positive relationships between staff and parents. Parents are well informed when incidents occur and are kept updated on children's progress. A parent said that their child enjoys coming to the home and calls it a holiday. Another child's parents were pleased with the transition process provided by staff and added that the team felt like 'family'.

Children are provided with opportunities to engage in a variety of activities. These include visits to the local community and spending time in the home's sensory or computing rooms. Children have access to a recently refurbished, spacious garden containing various apparatus for their enjoyment, such as a trampoline, roundabout and swing. This allows children to have positive day-to-day experiences.

Children live in a well-maintained home. However, the kitchen and dining areas, including some appliances and equipment, were not clean at the time of the inspection. The wall in the dining room is defaced with scribbling and markings and some displayed pictures are damaged. Children's bedrooms are not always decorated with personal items and are furnished with plastic mattresses. This detracts from the homely feel.

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

Risk assessments are completed and reviewed effectively. They clearly indicate risks for children and how these are to be managed. Discussions take place during staff meetings and with staff individually about how risks are to be managed. This assures children's safety.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met. The effective use of newly implemented systems helps to ensure that medication handling and administration are completed as directed by medical professionals. Where medication errors occur, action is taken to report and address the concerns. However, medication errors deemed serious by the provider are not always promptly reported to Ofsted. This prevents timely oversight by the regulator.

Children do not go missing from the home. They are closely monitored by staff in the home and in the community. Well-documented missing persons protocols are in place to guide staff on actions to take if children do go missing.

Staff use an individualised approach to manage children's behaviours effectively. However, some incident reports do not clearly detail the de-escalation measures used to support children to calm. Some reports also lack a record of the manager's oversight. This results in missed opportunities for reflection.

Leaders and managers adhere to safer recruitment processes. Thorough checks are completed before staff commence employment. This helps to protect children from potentially unsafe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are enthusiastic about providing good standards of care to children. The manager works alongside a caring and friendly staff team to ensure that children are provided with an individualised approach to their care.

Leaders and managers recognise the importance of children having stability and continuity of care, which they achieve through a stable staff team. This has resulted in children and their parents forming positive, trusting relationships with staff.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff have access to training programmes specific to children's individualised needs. Staff receive mandatory training when they start work. Further training in line with children's health needs is provided to staff. However, the training matrix does not always indicate completed or overdue training.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision sessions. Leaders and managers place a great emphasis on ensuring that staff receive ongoing support and development outside of their supervision space. There is also a focus on staff's individual needs. Consequently, staff feel well supported, empowered and valued.

Leaders and managers provide reflective group discussions about maintaining good practice. This demonstrates the ongoing commitment of leaders and managers to ensure that children's needs are at the forefront of their practice.

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 ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v))</p>	<p>30 September 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	<p>30 September 2023</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children’s home provides a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. The home should be a homely, domestic environment. Children’s homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene, etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than ‘institutional’ impression. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that records demonstrate that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and that they understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: SC405933

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Registered provider address: Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7QQ

Responsible individual: Paul Thomas

Registered manager: Elizabeth Mahdi

Inspectors

Sasha Reid, Social Care Inspector

Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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