

# SC370703

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 the local authority. It provides care for up to 12 children with learning or neurodevelopmental disabilities. There are four apartments that are suitable for providing short- or long-term care. There were seven children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2023.

### Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 2024

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 22 February 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2024	Full	Good
01/03/2023	Full	Good
23/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children make remarkable progress because they are looked after by staff who are deeply committed to understanding and meeting their individual needs. Staff are passionate about building and maintaining trusting relationships with children. They take great pride in their contribution to improving outcomes for children.

As a result of proactive support from staff, children make excellent progress in relation to their attendance and achievement in education. Staff celebrate children's success. They support them to maintain friendships with children from outside the home.

There is a deeply embedded culture of ensuring that children have positive experiences. Children benefit from being offered a wide range of activities. Staff also go to great lengths to celebrate special occasions. They involve children's friends and family members. One parent said staff had made their child's life interesting and fulfilled and they wished that the child could stay forever. Another parent said that they could not have wished for a better place for their child to live.

Children make good progress towards goals that are important to them. This is because staff are adept at noticing and rewarding children when they achieve something which may seem small but is significant for them.

Staff understand the importance of supporting children to spend time with their families. Family time is structured so that children and their families have quality time together. As a result, some children's relationships with their parents have significantly improved.

Staff are familiar with each child's methods of communication and enable children to influence decisions about the way that they are looked after. Staff are creative, and they are adept at expanding the range of communication tools available to children. Consequently, children know that their voices will be heard and their views are valued.

The processes that are followed when children move into and out of the home are exceptionally thoughtful. Managers and staff work closely with children's parents and with professionals who know children well to gain a thorough understanding of children's needs before they move in. Planning for children's moves to adult placements start many months before they leave. This ensures that children and their families experience positive and well-planned endings.

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

The home has been adapted so that children's physical needs can be safely met. The adaptations have been carried out sensitively to ensure that the children do not experience any unnecessary restrictions of their liberty. Careful consideration is given to which of the four apartments is the most suitable group living environment for children.

Staff know the children extremely well. They understand and consistently implement children's care plans and risk assessments, which are comprehensive and individualised.

The frequency and severity of behavioural incidents reduces over time because staff help children to overcome communication barriers. Staff recognise that changes in children's presentation and behaviour may indicate that they are struggling and need additional support. This enables staff to successfully de-escalate behavioural incidents at an early stage. All physical interventions since the last inspection have been at a low level.

Staff fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the safe storage, administration and recording of medication. Medication errors are rare. When errors do occur, they are taken seriously, and steps are taken to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

When safeguarding concerns are reported to the registered manager, she diligently follows safeguarding procedures. She involves external professionals when necessary. This thorough and transparent approach promotes children's safety.

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

The registered manager has created an aspirational and professional culture that is evident in all aspects of the way the home is run. One staff member said that the registered manager 'challenges us to be better. She supports our personal and professional development to enable us to be the next generation of leaders.'

The registered manager is extremely aspirational for children, and children's welfare is at the centre of all decisions. She understands the importance of working closely with other professionals and keeps them fully informed about children's progress. The registered manager proactively advocates for children and challenges decisions made by other professionals when she believes that those decisions are not made with children's best interests in mind.

Staff supervision and team meetings are used to good effect to ensure that staff have a sound understanding of children's needs. The excellent training offer ensures that children are looked after by knowledgeable and well-informed staff. The strong leadership of the home and the quality of care create an environment where staff are proud to work.

The registered manager is deeply committed to ensuring continuous improvement. As a result of robust monitoring systems, she has an exceptionally well-rounded view of the home's strengths and weaknesses. However, there was a minor shortfall in relation to records of the oversight of incident reports. The registered manager carries out thorough reviews of incidents with the children and staff involved, but the learning could be better recorded.

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

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. She is responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

## **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:** SC370703

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

**Registered provider:** Surrey County Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Paul Thomas

**Registered manager:** Allison Wykes

## Inspectors

Sonata Brisley, Social Care Inspector  
Kerry Howarth, Social Care Inspector

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