

SC068827

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to four children with social, behavioural, and emotional difficulties.

The suitably qualified manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2022.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 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: 7 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2023	Full	Good
05/12/2022	Full	Inadequate
25/08/2021	Full	Good
22/08/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive relationships with staff. Interactions between children and staff are kind-hearted and nurturing. One child identified particular members of staff who they trust and have built good relationships with.

Discussions between staff and children are well planned, restorative, and reflective. These conversations are a strength of the home. Staff are proactively invested in supporting children to achieve positive outcomes.

Children are making progress from their starting points. The children are enrolled in and attending education provisions. One child has made particularly strong progress in this area. They now engage in education and have aspirations to complete an apprenticeship. The staff team work collaboratively with education professionals to support children in achieving their goals.

The staff work closely with partner professionals. They describe staff as 'communicative' and 'transparent' in their approach. These professionals are positive about the care and support the staff provide the children with. Consequently, the home promotes a sense of collaborative working to meet the needs of the children.

Staff support children who are due to move on to independence, at their own pace. Staff involve the children in the preparation of these plans from moving on. For example, staff support them in learning how to use public transport and make health appointments. As a result, children know their plans for moving on to independence, and are positive about this.

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

Staff safeguarding practice is good. During an unsettled period in the home, some children made allegations against staff. Senior leaders managed these allegations appropriately. Children's views are taken seriously and prioritised. Safeguarding policies and procedures are followed, and actions taken are well documented. Professionals, staff and the local authority designated officer raised no concerns regarding the safeguarding practice of the staff.

Staff understand and manage the risks to children well. The staff are helped to understand risk through individualised risk assessments for each child. Staff update these risk assessments to ensure that they reflect the current needs and required support for the child. Staff are aware of, and review, new information to reflect the changes in need.

Staff use a variety of de-escalation strategies to prevent the use of physical intervention. As a result, physical restraint is rarely used in the home. When restraint has been used, it has been as a last resort. Restorative work with children around

the use of restraint is reflective and child focused. The manager plans to further support staff confidence through additional physical intervention training.

Staff work closely with the children to promote the development of positive peer relationships. These relationships are closely monitored and tracked by the staff team. This monitoring enables staff to have targeted conversations with children to support them. While there continues to be some challenge with dynamics in the group, incidents have significantly decreased due to staff's support.

The manager has clear monitoring processes in place to ensure that staff are recruited only once all suitability checks have been carried out. This reduces the risk of unsuitable people working with children.

Two significant incidents have occurred, which the manager did not inform Ofsted about. As a result, Ofsted, as the regulator, has not had full oversight of the home and any actions that have been taken to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager knows the children and staff well. She was previously the deputy manager and has worked at the home since it was registered. She is accessible to both children and staff.

Staff feel very well supported by the management team and state that staff morale is high. One staff member said that they could not ask for a 'better management team'. Staff supervisions are consistently undertaken to a good standard, with children and safeguarding routinely discussed.

Managers and leaders understand the strengths and areas for development in the home. The manager undertook a detailed learning review following two children moving out in an unplanned way. New procedures have been implemented specifically around children moving in to the home as a result. This has had a positive effect, with a more-settled home.

There is an emphasis on staff training and development in the home to enable staff to meet the needs of the children. All staff are either up to date or booked to complete core training.

The quality of record-keeping is variable. Some information from significant incidents is missing or not clearly recorded. Some language used in the records has not always been child friendly.

The staff team is diverse, and children are supported to express their cultural and spiritual needs. One child is supported to engage in online worship with their former place of worship. Opportunities for personal prayer, as appropriate, are promoted by staff in the home. This encouragement supports children to grow into confident and open adults.

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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))</p>	<p>29 January 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC068827

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Paul Thomas

Registered manager: Christine Hamilton

Inspectors

Karen Flanagan de Martinez, Social Care Inspector
Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

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