

SC474543

Registered provider: Bromley Healthcare Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a healthcare organisation and provides short breaks for up to 12 children at a time who are aged between five and 18 years old for children who have a variety of needs, including complex health needs, autism, physical and/or learning disabilities, and/or challenging behaviour.

The home registered with Ofsted in October 2006. The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 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: 24 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2023	Full	Good
19/07/2021	Full	Good
14/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/12/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy positive experiences during their stay. Children who attend for short breaks receive good-quality care individualised to their specific needs. The empathic, caring, fun, child-led interactions observed between children and staff are a strength of this short-break home.

Staff consider children's individual needs and preferences well in planning for their visits. For example, children's room preferences are prioritised, with their pictures placed on their room doors before their arrival. This presents and promotes a home-from-home environment, where children are relaxed and comfortable. One parent said, 'The way they settled him in was good. He is happy and he loves going.'

Children are encouraged to develop their independence, according to their individual needs. Staff support children with personal targets to help them develop life skills, such as using the toilet, holding cutlery to eat food independently and making a drink. They also work to develop children's social skills. One parent said their child is less shy and interacts more with others as a result of the care they receive.

Staff know and act on children's wishes and feelings, including their food choices, activities and interests. They use appropriate methods of communication to support children who are non-verbal, including pictures and signs. Staff use creative methods to support children to understand daily routines. This increases children's stability, understanding and autonomy.

Children engage in a wide range of activities, from interacting with visual projections on walls and floors to using the art room, garden, soft play space and sensory room. These activities promote safe sensory stimulation and enjoyment.

Children are also supported to enjoy activities in the community, including visits to the zoo, attending a summer garden party and visiting London attractions, such as the London Eye. Activities offered to children provide appropriate stimulation and align with individual targets and development goals.

Positive and effective communication that staff have established with parents, carers and other professionals ensures that the care they provide to children is bespoke and responsive to their current needs. Parents say they are confident in leaving their child for their stay, and that staff are accessible and keep them informed.

While the physical environment is adequate, some areas of the home could benefit from updating, to create a more stimulating and homely environment.

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

The manager and staff work closely with parents and social workers to assess and understand children's needs and risks. They develop detailed care plans and risk assessments which help them meet children's needs.

Appropriate levels of staffing support are provided to children, informed by comprehensive assessments of their needs. This includes making sure that children who require greater support, for example because of challenging behaviour or complex health conditions, get the help they need.

Behaviour management plans are robust and bespoke to each child. Staff manage incidents well, and appropriate management oversight is evident. Staff communicate effectively at handover points, ensuring that key information is shared to ensure children are safeguarded effectively.

Staff know individual children's vulnerabilities to stress well. They identify and respond to children when they may become upset or distressed. In these situations, they use effective strategies to reduce the child's anxiety and support them to feel understood and safe.

Staff undertake relevant training and are alert to safeguarding risks. They have good knowledge of safeguarding processes and procedures. This includes awareness of the Philomena protocol in relation to children going missing, even though it is rare for children to go missing from this home.

Staff are experienced at managing children's complex health needs. Staff work collaboratively with paediatric healthcare specialists and have access to their own on-call doctor.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management team has changed since the last inspection. The registered manager post had been a shared role. However, after the last manager left, the deputy manager has led the home as full-time registered manager since May 2023.

The organisation has since appointed a suitably experienced and well-qualified manager who is currently applying for Ofsted registration. These changes will need to be reflected in the home's statement of purpose and workforce development plan.

Staff feel well supported by managers. They receive mandatory and specialist training and development opportunities. However, these are not being accurately recorded on the main staff training matrix. Staff receive regular and effective supervisions and appraisals. In-house training is good and regular team meetings offer staff opportunities for learning and development. The wider organisation recognises and values the service and the staff team, with two members of staff being recognised with awards for their work across the organisation.

Safer recruitment processes are in place and staff have suitable experience and qualifications related to their role.

Managers assess effectively the quality of care provided to children. Their reports are comprehensive and accurately reflect the care the home provides. The manager works well with the independent visitor and values their input and advice. This helps them to identify where improvements may be needed.

The management team is strong. Leaders clearly show aspiration for the children in their care. A key strength is the flexibility and understanding shown to children's families, to ensure that the service 'fits the child and family's needs', as one health professional commented. This is demonstrated well in the adaptability and responsiveness shown to children with complex health needs and in the support and advocacy provided for their families. The registered manager was described by a professional as a 'diamond' for their efforts to support children and families.

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

- The registered person should ensure that children are able to experience a home that is homely and should seek as far as possible to maintain a homely environment rather than 'institutional' impression. This is in relation to some of the decor and furniture in some areas of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that workforce plan is kept up to date and is reflected in the home's statement of purpose. Updates to the workforce plan should include any new training and qualifications completed by staff working at the home and that the plan is used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development of staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraphs 10.10)

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: SC474543

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bromley Healthcare Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: Central Court, 1 Knoll Rise, Orpington, Kent BR6 0JA

Responsible individual: Felicity Akers

Registered manager: Emma Fullagar

Inspectors

Amanda Burrows, Social Care Inspector
Angela Reid, Social Care Inspector

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