

SC035625

Registered provider: Rowden House School Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a residential special school. It can accommodate up to 30 children who have learning disabilities across six houses within the grounds of the school. At the time of this inspection, five houses were open and were accommodating 20 children. The registered manager has managed the home since February 2018.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 October 2019

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: 5 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/06/2018	Full	Good
12/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/06/2017	Full	Inadequate

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

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. 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)
This specifically relates to maintaining accurate records detailing when children have their incontinence pads changed.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The management team has successfully developed the procedure for supporting children to move into the home. This is now a key strength of the service. Children already living in the home are well prepared for new children arriving, through discussions and the use of social stories. Children and families new to the provision are supported through thorough assessments and multiple visits. Some parents have been involved in preparing and decorating their child's bedroom. As a result, parents are reassured, and children quickly settle into their new home.

Staff support children to achieve their targets and objectives. They have a good understanding of children's abilities and strive to help them to make continual progress. Staff provide children with opportunities to make friends, participate in new activities and sensory experiences, attend and succeed in education and learn new skills. This increases their opportunities as they move into adulthood.

Staff support children with toileting programmes and help them to use incontinence pads. Staff describe their good practice, but records lack detail. This hinders the monitoring of children's progress in this area.

The registered manager maintains a good standard of accommodation across all six houses. At the time of the inspection, one home was closed as the children living there had moved out. New children will not move in until the building has been refurbished and decorated throughout. Activity areas across the site also continue to be developed. For example, a new 'water room' has been built and is popular with the children.

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

Managers and staff make sure that children are safe. There have been no incidents of children going missing since the last inspection. Staff receive up-to-date training in all areas of safeguarding. This ensures that children are protected from harm and their needs are promoted.

Skilled staff support children to learn new communication skills and alternative ways to express their emotions. This increases children's ability to cope with everyday situations and live alongside others. These skills have a positive impact on their quality of life and the progress that they make. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant reduction in the number of incidents and the use of physical interventions.

Staff are nurturing and develop positive relationships with children and parents. They use individual key-work sessions to understand each child's different needs and interests. They are also in regular contact with children's families. This collaboration ensures the ongoing safety and well-being of children. For example, a mother's suggestion to introduce a 'Fireman Sam' helmet has enabled staff to support her child to leave the building when the fire alarm sounds.

Children make good progress in understanding their health needs. Staff have developed new protocols with local health professionals. Health professionals now have an improved understanding of the children's needs and children have better access to health services. This has resulted in children successfully attending appointments and receiving the treatment that they require.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The quality of relationships between managers, staff, parents and professionals is a strength of this service. The registered manager ensures that there is clear communication with a wide range of professionals. He also gives robust challenge, if required, to ensure that children's needs are given high priority.

Staff talked positively about the increased level of support and oversight by managers. They receive regular, good-quality supervision, training and team meetings, which focus on the needs of children and support staff to reflect on their practice.

Staff are proud of the children. Their successes are celebrated across the site and in the local community. Children are involved in a wide range of events. These include a graduation ceremony, an annual ball, an 'in-bloom' competition (held between the different houses' gardens) and a local scarecrow competition. Children talked enthusiastically about their involvement in these events, which are captured on canvases proudly displayed in the houses and photos in children's albums.

The registered manager has a clear vision for the development of the service. His effective use of quality assurance systems ensures that he has a good oversight of the operation of the service, the practice of staff and the progress that children are making.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC035625

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Rowden House School Limited

Registered provider address: 1 St George's, Vernon Gate, Derby, Derbyshire DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Paul Bliss

Inspectors

Dawn Bennett, social care inspector
Louise Whittle, social care inspector
Lisa O'Donovan, social care inspector

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