

2583028

Registered provider: The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children aged between five and 17. According to the home's statement of purpose, care is provided for children with social, emotional and behavioural challenges as well as some form of deafness or communication difficulties.

A manager is appointed and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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: 6 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2022	Full	Good
07/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The home is warm, welcoming and tailored well to the needs of deaf children. For example, the manager has sourced special furniture which meets children's sensory needs. This includes a booth which provides an excellent study or play space for children. Children's bedrooms are personalised and decorated to a high standard. They are inviting places for children to call their own.

Children are making significant progress from their starting points. Children who have previously struggled with their environments due to their complex needs and limited communication are now thriving. They are supported to achieve and to enjoy just being children. Children are also supported to develop and maintain important relationships with family members.

Children feel like they belong in the home and are nurtured and cared for to a high standard. Children are being parented well. Boundaries and expectations for children are consistent and are promoted with warmth and care. This is greatly helping children to settle and thrive. Children's views are sought on a regular basis and are intrinsic to care planning.

The manager has linked with other parents to help promote friendships and usual childhood experiences. For example, children have friends' home for tea and go on trips with them. These are not one-off activities but are regular occurrences. The home is now a social hub with regular visitors and a lively atmosphere.

The manager's positive parenting style is having a significant impact on children's progress and well-being. One child previously struggled to attend school. They are now attending on a regular basis and running to school in the morning. This child is also achieving well.

One child stayed at the home for a limited time. This was planned so that they would be able to return home to their parents' care. This went well and the child has now returned home.

A new child is due to move into the home in coming months and the preparation for their move is excellent. They have been spending time at the home and will be having an enjoyable trip with adults over the Christmas period.

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

Adults provide a nurturing environment which has a significantly positive impact for children. Incidents for one child have dramatically reduced. They are much happier and settled.

Adults are providing clear boundaries for children, which is helping to keep them safe. They are also helping children to enjoy healthy relationships with each other at home and school.

Thrive assessments have been carried out by the manager, and are helping to ensure that care planning is thorough and that adults understand children's individual needs.

Children are supported to develop healthy behaviours, manage relationships and keep themselves safe. The manager ensures that children's individual communication needs are fully supported. At times, social stories and emotion toys are used to help children convey their experiences and emotions.

There has been one medication error. There was no significant impact on the child at this time. Robust action was taken to reduce the risk of a repeat error. This included an audit of medication and a comprehensive review of practice with medical professionals.

Appropriate action is taken when any concerns about practice are raised. Referrals to the local authority designated officer are made when required, and reflective practice is consistently applied to help drive improvement.

The impact risk assessment completed to consider the needs of children and the ability of staff to meet them is comprehensive. This helps the manager to consider any issues and strengthen their care planning further.

There have been two restraints since the previous inspection. No significant concerns regarding practice were identified and children's feelings were fully considered after both.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is driving standards of care at the home. She is invested in the children and care team. She listens to her team and has played a large role in creating an inclusive culture. Both hearing and deaf adults work at the home, which is fantastic for children to experience. The manager's application to register with Ofsted has been submitted.

Since the manager started to work at the home, she has had a significant positive impact on outcomes for children. She is supporting them to be safe, to achieve and to enjoy their childhoods.

Care planning is informed by research and theory to help carers fully understand children's needs. The manager has carried out in-depth assessments which draw on children's lived experiences and previous assessments. This considered approach is promoting insightful and considered care planning.

At times, care planning documents are lengthy, and the narrative is not always child centred. This is a theme in several records.

One parent spoken with during the inspection spoke highly of the care her son receives from adults. The manager is in regular contact with the parent.

All adults who work at the home speak of the significant improvements the manager has made for children and the team.

Recruitment practice is in line with safer recruitment. This is helping to safeguard children further.

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

- The registered person should ensure that children are supported to access important written information about their lives. Records should be written in a child-appropriate way so that children can access this information at any point. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: 2583028

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

Registered provider address: The Deaf Academy, 1 Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AU

Responsible individual: James Heaver

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Polly Soper, Social Care Inspector

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