

SC396813

Registered provider: Chailey Heritage Foundation

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a charity. It provides care for up to 27 children with profound physical disabilities, sensory impairments and complex medical needs who may also have learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, 15 children were staying across the three bungalows. This includes children who live at the home on a long-term basis and those who attend for weekly boarding and short breaks.

A non-maintained special school is also on site, catering for children and young people aged three to 19 years. Adults receive residential care in Care Quality Commission registered homes on the same site. A team of nurses, therapists and specialists, provided by Sussex Community Foundation Trust, is also based on site and provides medical support. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this setting.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

Inspection dates: 11 and 13 November 2025

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: 15 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 15/01/2025 | Full | Good |
| 07/11/2023 | Full | Good |
| 30/11/2022 | Full | Good |
| 21/09/2021 | Full | Good |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in relation to their social and emotional well-being. One child has been able to expand the range of activities they can enjoy because staff have given them sensitive support to try new experiences. Another child has been able to start spending time with their family at home. The child's parent said, 'The staff are lovely, and I am very happy with how well he is looked after.'

Staff understand and support children's individual communication needs. Children who are non-verbal are supported to share their views. Staff are skilled at responding to signs that children are becoming upset and use a sensitive approach to help them calm. Support is provided with a sense of fun, and children are continuously helped to make choices. This means that children's feelings are considered and respected.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that are suited to their individual interests, both inside and outside the home. Children's ideas and preferences are explored by supporting them to try new experiences and enabling them to communicate what they like and to what extent they want to participate. Children have been on holidays and had adventurous days out. For example, one child with complex health needs was helped to enjoy rides at a theme park.

Children's health needs are understood and being met. The multi-disciplinary, child-centred approach followed by staff has a positive impact on how children are supported and cared for. For example, whenever possible, children have opportunities to become increasingly mobile. The physical health of two children has improved significantly since they came to live at the home.

The children benefit from their time spent in the spacious, colourful and inclusive environment. Sensory equipment is scattered around to engage and stimulate children's interest. Children's bedrooms are adapted to their needs, with thoughtful decoration and personal touches.

Overall, partnership working with external professionals is very good. They speak positively about the quality of care that children receive, communication and joint working. However, there is one example of a delay in seeking support for one child who needed help to understand a significant loss.

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

Staff have a good understanding of each child's needs and risks. Care plans are clear and child centred. Information is easy to understand, so staff are aware of how to care for children and how to work with them. Staff establish consistent, individualised boundaries and routine. This promotes secure and trusting relationships between staff and children.

Children who stay at the home have complex physical and health needs. The manager works closely with health professionals to agree medical protocols and risk assessments. Staff have the appropriate training and are confident in how to deliver specialist care and health monitoring.

Medication is managed safely. There are robust processes in place to ensure that staff can confidently and competently administer medication. Any discrepancies in administration are recorded, and staff seek advice from the clinical team about what action should be taken.

Safer recruitment processes have improved since the previous inspection. Managers are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that only appropriately vetted individuals work at the home and provide care for children. New staff are supported through a comprehensive induction and training programme. This provides staff with the opportunity to learn the right skills and effectively meet the needs of children.

Staff are aware of children's risks and record incidents in line with procedure. Managers review incident reports. However, there is a lack of scrutiny of the information recorded. As a result, details about what happened are not fully understood or evaluated. This means that the appropriate level of reflection and follow-up action are not taking place, and safeguarding concerns are not always immediately recognised.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers have successfully embedded changes that have improved care planning and oversight of children's care. There is increased management presence in the service and enhanced communication systems. This has made a difference to how well the team work together, and staff say they feel better supported and connected to the management team.

Managers are ambitious for the service and are committed to providing high standards of care. Staff are well supported through robust inductions, supervision, regular meetings and close collaboration. This approach supports staff resilience, and staffing levels are stable. Managers work proactively with the dedicated team, taking a collaborative approach to service development.

Transition planning is good. Managers consider children's needs and matching assessments to understand if the service will be able to fully and safely support them. Staff spend time with children and people important to them before children move in. This means that they understand each child's individuality and unique needs, are well prepared to support children and help them to settle quickly.

Feedback from parents and other professionals is largely positive. Social workers said they have confidence that concerns are well managed and that communication with managers is good. They say that children with complex needs are supported with care

and respect. One social worker said that staff support children to 'thrive and achieve' in all areas.

Complaints are not responded to consistently. Following one complaint, there was a robust response and learning review. In another example, managers responded verbally to a concern raised by a parent. However, the complaint was not recorded or acknowledged in writing. As a result, the parent did not feel that the complaint was fully resolved.

Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in management capacity. This has improved the distribution of work. However, understanding around roles and responsibilities has not yet been fully embedded. As a result, key information is not always communicated to the registered manager. This means that they do not always have full oversight of children's care and are not able to provide guidance on any improvements required.

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that there is consistent management oversight of incidents to identify any safeguarding concerns,</p> | <p>31 December 2025</p> |

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| required actions, learning and support needs of staff and children. | |
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Recommendations

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should ensure that they have consistent oversight of all work being completed to evaluate patterns and trends and identify areas of learning in order to make continuous improvements. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of any investigation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)
- The home should work in partnership with relevant people as appropriate to ensure that each child is provided with the support, information and resources they need. Specifically, ensure that staff follow up any further needs identified in care planning meetings in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 22, paragraph 4.6)

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: SC396813

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Chailey Heritage Foundation

Responsible individual: Gareth Germer

Registered manager: Sarah Leddy

Inspectors

Shirin White, Social Care Inspector

Helen Simmons, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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