

1216505

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024. The inspectors observed and spoke to the five children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious child protection allegations were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 January 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 26 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/06/2023	Full	Good
16/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/10/2021	Full	Good
17/08/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

A dedicated core staff team has provided consistent and excellent support for the children. This helps the children to feel a sense of belonging and ensures that they feel wanted and cared for.

Children are thriving and make progress in all areas of their lives from the point they move into the home. They are all settled and enjoy living in their home. Staff have established strong and nurturing relationships with the children.

The staff have an excellent understanding of each child's journey and presenting needs. Staff have daily chats with the children at the dinner table, and have discussions in the car, alongside planned one-on-one conversations. These encourage children to actively participate in decisions, and they create opportunities for them to share their thoughts and feelings. As a result, children feel valued and listened to.

The children progressively gain essential life skills such as cooking, budgeting, and managing their personal hygiene. The staff remind children just how capable they are. One child who previously could not leave the home is travelling independently using public transport to college, which is a significant achievement. These skills prepare children for successful transitions to independence in the future.

Staff are aspirational for children. Children participate in various leisure and community activities that help them to explore their interests, have fun and build their social confidence. Many friendships have blossomed among the children, who enjoy activities such as football, gaming and cooking together. Staff support these experiences, including going on overnight trips. Recently children enjoyed wild camping with each other, roasting marshmallows, and bush crafting. These experiences enrich children's childhoods.

All children's achievements are celebrated. The unwavering support that children receive from staff gives them the confidence that they can achieve their goals and helps them to be aspirational for the future. Senior leaders held an awards night for the children. All children received awards in recognition of their progress and achievements. One child said, 'It was mint, we all dressed up and had a rave on the dance floor.'

Children's education is prioritised. Children who previously struggled with regular attendance, or missed significant amounts of education, have successfully reintegrated into the learning environment. The collaboration with one child's school enhanced the therapeutic support available to them and enabled them to work through their sense of self in a safe manner. The manager is innovative in pursuing and advocating for a specialist internship on behalf of one child, which will combine employment and education. Another child has made considerable progress in successfully completing their functional skills and is now enrolled on a full-time college course.

Children's relationships with family and friends are well supported by staff, who understand the significance of maintaining these relationships. The team has been successful in re-establishing relationships with children and their families. This work has proven to be extremely valuable. For some children they have reconnected with family for the first time in several years.

This extends to children's friendships in that staff have been creative in facilitating and arranging this time even for those friends who live a significant distance away. Children's friends have been welcomed to the home, included in trips and holidays away. One child said, 'If it wasn't for [name of staff] I am not sure I would have ever seen my friend again.'

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

Children's plans are comprehensive and give great insight into the children's needs and risks, and how these are to be managed to ensure their safety and well-being. Each child has a positive behaviour support plan that outlines individualised strategies to support staff in understanding and supporting their complex needs. As a result, children are well supported and protected.

Managers and staff are good role models for the children. They have high expectations for the children, and incidents of negative behaviour are rare. This is because children are respectful of each other and the managers and staff, who set age-appropriate boundaries.

Staff take pride in helping children to succeed by providing consistent boundaries and an openness in their practice. They support children in taking age-appropriate and developmentally suitable risks. This is because staff recognise that a well-managed risk is a crucial aspect of children's development. Staff carefully balance the need for safety with the freedom and responsibility that is appropriate for each child's age, such as playing out and spending time with friends.

When children do make poor choices, staff work alongside them to recognise what they could have done differently. This empowers children to make appropriate and safe decisions in their lives. One child said, 'I am grateful because I have made some poor choices in the past, they didn't get mad at me, they just helped me to learn right from wrong. I am making better choices now and am really proud.'

Children rarely go missing from the home. When they do, staff respond promptly and appropriately. There are clear plans for staff to manage the risks and support the child. Children are offered an independent return home interview and spend time with staff to talk about their experiences, so that staff can be assured of the child's well-being.

Children are in good health. Children's needs are assessed quickly when they arrive at the home. This helps to identify their support needs. This has been instrumental in helping one child to process and understand their past trauma and to help with their

emotional healing. The manager and staff use research to introduce sensory resources to the child. As a result, self-injurious behaviour and overall health has improved.

The registered manager identified shortfalls within safer recruitment processes prior to the inspection. The registered manager and responsible individual have made improvements to this process, and there has been no risk or harm to children.

Leaders prioritise the safety and protection of children. When there are concerns raised about staff, leaders take these seriously. They engage with external safeguarding professionals, such as the local authority designated officer and the police. Furthermore, leaders complete their own investigation to look at whether there are any lessons to be learnt.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by an ambitious manager who strives to provide children with good quality care. She has created a highly aspirational and positive culture. This has inspired the same beliefs in the staff. The manager ensures that the therapeutic and child focused approach is embedded in staff practice.

Managers and staff have high expectations and are ambitious about the children's futures. They speak with passion about providing exceptional quality of care, and they work with children to unlock their potential.

Staff development is a strong focus in the home. The staff are highly skilled and receive ongoing training and professional development. The manager sources additional training that is individualised to the current needs of the children. Furthermore, the manager is proactive in looking ahead to ensure her staff team has the skills to respond to children. For example, staff recently received training on how they should respond to children who disclose sexual abuse. This ensures that children receive appropriate responses when needed.

Staff are proud to work at the home. Staff receive regular, focused, and reflective supervision. Team meetings take place monthly and ensure that staff are involved and aware of decision-making in relation to children. Furthermore, the meetings are interactive, and the manager disseminates relevant information, uses quizzes and case studies to enhance staff practice.

Highly effective monitoring and quality assurance systems provide the registered manager with the information she needs to thoroughly scrutinise the quality of care that children receive. The registered manager's oversight enables her to monitor patterns and trends, and to swiftly adjust systems and processes when this is needed.

The manager advocates strongly on behalf of children, including speaking up on their behalf so that decisions are made in their best interests. This includes challenging partner agencies to ensure that children have every opportunity to thrive. One example includes the responses to one child in a school setting. The manager demonstrated

strong leadership skills in challenging the appropriateness of the responses and how this was managed. A further example includes the manager advocating for a child to go on holiday abroad with their family.

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'.

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

Recommendations

The registered person should ensure that recruitment and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 6, paragraph 13.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1216505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Registered provider address: Rickleton 1B, Bowes Offices, Lambton Park, Chester Le Street DH3 4AN

Responsible individual: Simon Duffy

Registered manager: Alleysha Jones

Inspectors

Claire Webster, Social Care Inspector
Sarah McGow, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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