

1226612

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home.

There is no registered manager. An interim manager is in post.

Inspection date: 24 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 12 August 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has resigned pending a safeguarding investigation. The organisation has ensured that there is a manager at the home. Management cover was initially provided by the responsible individual. An interim manager took over at the beginning of January 2025. A new manager has been appointed. They will apply to register once their employment has started.

Leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding allegations are investigated thoroughly. Three investigations have taken place, including one with the manager. Safeguarding partners were involved throughout these processes. This collaborative working ensures that external oversight is taking place.

As well as changes in management, new staff have been recruited. They are enthusiastic and committed to helping children. All staff spoken to were knowledgeable about the therapeutic model used and keen to improve their practice in this area. This means that staff can better provide the service as described in the statement of purpose.

Risk assessments have been updated. They cover all obvious risks and provide staff with appropriate guidance on the action to take when unsafe situations arise. Staff can articulate the content of risk assessments. Staff understand the strategies to enable a child to use their phone safely. This shows that the information in the documents is understood by the team and helps them to keep children safe.

Children have positive relationships with staff. Children feel safe and comfortable to talk to staff about when they return from being missing from care. This means staff can help children sooner if they are at risk of harm. This has contributed to reduced risks for one child.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met. There have been occasions when a child has not taken their medication due to being missing from the home. When this happens, staff have sought medical advice.

A new independent visitor has been appointed. The visitor's reports are thorough and a helpful tool to support the manager to improve the service.

Children have education plans and timetables, which are detailed in their care plans. These explain what children are expected to do daily. However, records of when children attend are unclear, meaning that progress and patterns of non-attendance are not easily identifiable. It is also not clear what plans are in place for children when they refuse school.

Risk assessments and care plans do not fully recognise neurodiversity and how this influences a child's decision-making. This means that support for the child does not include an understanding of neurodiversity and how this affects risk.

Staff use language that does not recognise the true risk of what a child is experiencing. In discussions following incidents, staff, including managers see the child as having a choice about risks. This means that the risk posed by other people is not fully understood by staff. This transfers blame of possible exploitation to the child. This also loses sight of the vulnerability and underlying needs that the child is trying to meet. The staff have not helped the child to understand consent. This work is important due to the child's neurodiversity and how they interpret other people's intentions.

One staff member has been employed at the home for over two years. Despite this time, they are yet to complete their formal qualification. This means that they still require the formal knowledge to carry out their role successfully.

The manager has ensured that incidents involving children are notified to Ofsted. However, since the last inspection, a social worker has made a complaint that is in the process of being fully investigated. This was not notified, meaning that Ofsted was not able to have full oversight of this.

Some rooms in the house need attention. A room that children use has a large area that needs painting. There are items of furniture in the room that appear to be in pieces. The responsible individual advised that the layout and use of rooms are being changed. However, the presentation of this room does not provide a nurturing space for children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/06/2022	Full	Good
19/10/2021	Full	Good

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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(f)(h)) In particular: ensure that care plans and risk assessments appropriately recognise children's neurodiversity and guide staff on how to meet children's needs effectively; ensure that staff understand child exploitation; ensure that key-work sessions are directed at keeping children safe and healthy; ensure that children's education attendance is recorded to evidence learning progress.	1 May 2025

The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	1 May 2025
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Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that a homely environment is always maintained and decorated to a high standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that regulation 40 notifications are sent to Ofsted within 24 hours. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1226612

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 33A, Portsmouth Road, Southampton SO19 9BA

Responsible individual: Steven Cairns

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Hannah Phillips, Social Care Inspector

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