

1230268

Registered provider: Kites Children Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It provides specialist therapeutic care for up to five children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2016.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/06/2023	Full	Good
06/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/10/2021	Full	Good
10/06/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This inspection was brought forward because of concerns received by Ofsted from the independent person's monitoring reports.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home. Three children have moved into the home and two children have moved on since the last inspection. Both children moved on because the staff could not meet their needs safely. One child left in an unplanned way.

Recently there has been an unsettled period. The children's experiences have been negatively affected by difficult group dynamics at the home. Since then the group dynamics have improved. Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs. The children make progress from their starting points and have established trusting relationships with staff.

All of the children attend school. Children have high attendance and engage well in their learning. One child is excelling in mathematics and is taking a higher-level GCSE exam. Staff provide a good routine and structure. There are strong levels of communication between residential staff and school staff. This successfully minimises any previous gaps in children's learning.

Children receive individual and group therapy to address their previous trauma and explore their feelings. This has been highlighted by children, families and social workers as a strength of the support provided.

Children take part in a wide range of enriching activities. All children enjoyed a short break at a beach resort. Activities include; go-karting, visiting football stadiums, golfing and campfire evenings. These experiences improve children's sense of community and well-being.

Staff provide good support for children to explore their individual identities. This has helped children to express their individuality and preferences in a safe space.

Staff encourage children to participate in independence building activities such as budgeting, washing their own clothes and cooking. However, staff have failed to ensure an appropriate level of cleanliness in children's bedrooms. At times, children's bedrooms are highly cluttered and unhygienic which has the potential to increase health and safety concerns.

The home is generally well-decorated and appointed. However, there are several areas that need attention. A large area of the back garden includes nettles and weeds and is unkempt. One child's clothing storage is not fit for purpose. The staff smoking area is situated outside a designated therapeutic room for children. This detracts from the

intended added value of this space. If staff take smoking breaks that children can see, this does not provide healthy role models.

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

Staff are well trained in safeguarding practice. They are clear about their responsibilities in safeguarding children. The staff have a good knowledge of procedures and children's individual needs.

Leaders and managers ensure regular monitoring meetings take place between staff, therapists and teachers. Staff use these reviews to evaluate children's progress and review their current risks. Up-to-date risk-reduction measures are followed by staff and support children's safety.

Children participate regularly in well-planned, one-to-one discussions with staff. Emerging subjects include managing healthy relationships, road safety awareness and developing emotional coping strategies. These discussions improve children's knowledge of their personal safety.

Staff take appropriate action when children are missing from the home. Children are helped to return at the earliest opportunity. Staff actively look for children and use one-to-one work with children to understand and support their feelings.

Since the last inspection, a cycle of high-risk behaviours has affected the group dynamics. These led to some children feeling unsafe. However, at the time of this inspection, children said that they felt safer and happier. Children said that staff were empathetic and proactive during the previously difficult time.

Staff use physical interventions proportionately and infrequently. However, some records relating to these interventions do not include the de-escalation measures used by staff. Managerial oversight is missing, and the depth of staff debriefs is limited. This reduces the effectiveness of the analysis and learning from these interventions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is qualified and has the skills to manage the home. He is supported by a long-standing deputy manager and a group of team leaders. An experienced responsible individual provides oversight of the leadership team.

There are areas of managerial monitoring and oversight that require improvement. Leaders and managers have not ensured that one child's plan was updated to reflect further information of the child's recent diagnosis. There are several recommendations highlighted from the independent person's monthly monitoring visits which are not always actioned in a timely way by the manager. This has led to some of the recommendations being restated and practice at the home not improving.

The home's statement of purpose is updated regularly, and the internal quality of care reviews are carried out on time. However, these are not submitted to Ofsted as required. This reduces Ofsted's oversight of the home.

There is a suitable complaints procedure. When children raise complaints, these are responded to in detail by leaders and managers. Thorough discussions take place with children and further actions are generated. However, children are not given the opportunity to express if they feel satisfied with the response. This means that children do not always feel that their concerns have been resolved.

Staff say that they feel well supported by leaders and managers. Regular supervision sessions and staff appraisals take place. These provide reflection and development opportunities for staff. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that individual staff support has adequately addressed the poor experiences of children recently moving on. There are elements of these moves that could have been more empathetic to the children's lived experiences.

Generally, there are appropriate processes to ensure notifications are made to Ofsted when required. However, one safeguarding concern that involved a serious incident between two children and the police was not notified. This means that Ofsted's capacity to monitor the safeguards has been reduced.

Leaders and managers provide well-developed training which equips staff with the skills to meet the individual needs of children. Regular team meetings take place and are well-attended. This supports a professional culture and assists staff in identifying unified goals.

Feedback from social workers and parents is positive about the care provided at the home. They highlight good levels of communication regarding children's progress and experiences.

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, 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; 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)(h)) In particular; ensure effective oversight of children's plans. action the recommendations made by the independent person to improve practice. ensure that the home's statement of purpose and internal quality of care reviews are submitted to Ofsted within the required timescales. ensure responses to children's complaints are clear in relation to children's views being resolved.	5 July 2024
The registered person must ensure that—	5 July 2024

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3) (a)(v)(b)(i)(ii))	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(ix)(x))	5 July 2024
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;	5 July 2024

use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to —

meet the needs of each child.

(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i))

In particular;

ensure that adequate bedroom furniture is provided and children's bedrooms are effectively monitored.

ensure that the gardens are well maintained and the staff smoking area is repositioned.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they consider reviewing thresholds for submitting notifications of serious incidents to Ofsted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.11)

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: 1230268

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kites Children Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Langham, Colchester CO4 5PX

Responsible individual: Deborah Carr

Registered manager: Peter McGugan

Inspector

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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