

1232649

Registered provider: Artemis Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The 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 2020.

The inspector spoke with three of the five children who live in this home.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 August 2023

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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/09/2022	Full	Good
09/11/2021	Full	Good
24/09/2019	Full	Good
18/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is a strong focus on supporting the children to make progress. The staff understand each child's starting point and past experiences. They use this understanding to develop meaningful opportunities that help the children to make advances in areas that are important to them. This includes unaccompanied asylum-seeking children being supported to learn the English language and attend cultural groups. This means that they can make friends with people who have similar experiences to themselves.

New children are welcomed into the home by staff who have taken the time to get to know them before they arrive. Equally, when children are ready to move on to their new accommodation, staff support them to do so in a planned way. Children choose to remain in contact with the staff and the manager after they leave the home, to receive ongoing emotional support.

Children said that they enjoy living in this home. They have developed positive relationships with one another and enjoy spending time together in the home, on community activities and at group holidays. The children particularly enjoy themed cultural nights where they take turns in researching a country, learning about their customs and cooking a selection of local cuisine for the group. This helps the children to understand and appreciate the diverse backgrounds of others.

The staff work hard to develop positive relationships with children. This is helped by the staff having regular and meaningful consultation with the children. The children also benefit from an independent advocate who they meet with monthly. Children are regularly provided with feedback to their views and requests. As a result, the children feel valued and listened to.

The children are supported to follow their chosen religion and cultural traditions. The staff have developed a positive relationship with local places of worship. The staff work hard to learn about each child's culture to ensure that they can fully support and understand their individual needs.

The staff celebrate the children's achievements. There is an abundance of photos and certificates displayed across the home. Staff and children take pride in their surroundings, which is evident in the well-presented homely environment.

Children's records do not yet consistently use non-stigmatising language. Equally, staff have developed a habit of using institutionalised language with children, such as 'contact' instead of 'family time'. This is not helpful for the children and reinforces unnecessary stigma for children who are living away from home.

Additionally, the current children would benefit from a greater balance of male and female staff members. This would provide children with better access to care from staff members of their preferred gender and a greater range of role models.

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

The children benefit from living in an environment that mirrors a family home. The staff model and teach children the values of kindness and respect. The staff have high expectations of the children, which they instil through positive boundaries. When children struggle to follow the rules of the home or their individual care plans, staff use reasonable consequences that are balanced and proportionate.

Staff are attuned to children's early indicators that they are becoming upset. They use a range of proactive strategies that help the children to remain calm. As a result, staff rarely need to physically hold the children. The staff's recording, and discussions with the staff and children involved, helps the team of staff to reflect on their actions. This supports the staff's future learning and development, and any learning is incorporated into the children's support plans.

Risks to the children are understood and well managed by the staff team. The staff work alongside other agencies, such as the police and local intervention groups, to develop their knowledge and understanding about children's individual risks. They use this knowledge to develop strategies that help children to become safer.

The staff are trained to identify children's vulnerability factors and early indicators that children are at increased risk of exploitation. The children also have access to other specialist agencies to educate them about their own vulnerabilities.

Missing-from-home incidents have decreased. This is testament to the relationships that staff have developed with the children. When children go missing, the staff manage these episodes well. When the children return home, they are welcomed and cared for by the staff team.

Safeguarding arrangements in the home are well designed and tailored to children's individual needs. This includes the use of parental controls installed on the children's devices. This helps to prevent the children from accessing unsafe websites and social media. A financial tracking system is used as an additional safeguarding strategy. This demonstrates the staff team's creativity to safeguard children without hindering their experiences.

Fire arrangements in the home are not yet fully effective. Staff and the manager have failed to identify combustible materials that are being stored in a high-risk area of the home. This practice is not in line with fire safety risk assessment and places children and staff at unnecessary and increased risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The dedicated manager has a sound knowledge and understanding of each child. This is because the manager balances her own work tasks with time spent directly supporting the children. This helps her to fully understand the children's needs and develop meaningful care plans to ensure that children make good progress.

The manager is admired by professionals, parents and staff for her persistent determination to improve the lives of children living in the home. She is driven to help children achieve their personal aspirations and goals. As a result, children living in this home thrive.

The manager is a strong advocate for children's rights. She confidently challenges other professionals when the children's needs are not being met. There are many examples where the manager's challenge has resulted in better outcomes for the children. The manager understands her own areas of expertise and her limitations. When challenges arise that are outside of her expertise, she seeks support from other professionals and local community groups. Positive relationships with other professionals and partnership working are at the centre of the manager's practice.

The manager has high expectations of her staff team. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust. The manager understands the importance of developing the staff team's skills and uses a range of tools to achieve this. This includes the staff receiving a suite of training that is specifically sourced by the manager to ensure that they have the appropriate skills to meet the children's needs.

Team meetings and supervision sessions are of a consistently high quality. The manager uses her observations of staff practice to inform reflective discussions during supervision sessions. The manager provides positive and constructive criticism, which helps the staff to develop their practice.

The manager's monitoring systems allow her to understand the strengths and areas of development. These also enable the manager to identify shortfalls in children's care and to act quickly to avoid any impact on the children. The manager has a clear plan for development. This encompasses staffing needs, children's progress and the physical environment. The manager regularly reviews and tracks her own progress in meeting the actions in this plan. This ensures that the home continues to make progress.

The manager has recently set up a providers' forum in the local area. After contacting other providers, she hosted this meeting and invited key professionals from the police and local authority to add value and share their knowledge. This is impressive and innovative and demonstrates the manager's real drive for continued improvement.

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
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)) This specifically relates to the storage of combustible materials in high-risk areas of the home.	16 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that care meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background. This specifically relates to making sure that there is a good balance of male and female members of staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1232649

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Artemis Support Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Queens Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1RN

Responsible individual: Kerry Duerden

Registered manager: Emma Lewis

Inspector

Beth Forster, Social Care Inspector

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