

1241023

Registered provider: Treehouse Educare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by an organisation which also operates a registered school on the same site. The inspector only inspected the social care provision during this inspection.

This children's home provides care for up to eight children with learning disabilities. The organisation specialises in care and education for children with autism. The residential care is provided across two separate houses on the site. Children can live at the home full time, or they may stay during term time only or for short breaks.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 4 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/09/2019	Full	Good
21/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/09/2018	Full	Good
21/03/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy a warm and friendly atmosphere at the home. Children make good progress across all aspects of their lives. Staff successfully encourage and support children to meet their individual targets and goals.

Children make good progress educationally. All children attend the on-site school. Education staff and residential staff work together effectively. This ensures that children attend regularly and are supported with their learning and personal development.

Children take part in a good variety of activities. Their talents and interests are encouraged. Some children attend guitar and singing lessons. Children make new friends through attending a youth club. Children experience trips to the seaside and local farms. They have fun at the home by dressing up and having parties to celebrate special occasions.

Children maintain relationships with their family and those important to them. One family member said, 'I think the care and support is phenomenal.' Staff ensure that any health needs are met. One child now tries new foods, which is good for their dietary needs.

Children successfully learn life skills. These include completing laundry and cleaning their rooms. Mealtimes are joyous events where everyone helps out to prepare food, lay the table and clear away. Children and staff eat together and chat comfortably about their day.

Staff help children to learn about social topics such as understanding about changes to their bodies and sex education. This was a previous recommendation and is met. Staff spend focused time with children individually on a regular basis. These sessions cover a good range of topics such as budgeting, strategies around anxiety, and healthy eating. These meetings help to build strong bonds between the children and staff.

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

Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a child's welfare. They receive training in safeguarding topics, such as online safety and managing allegations. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who know how to keep them safe.

Staff understand the individual risks for each child. There are good risk management plans in place. These clearly identify strategies for staff to follow in order to reduce risk.

Children identify adults who they would speak to if they were worried. Staff respond quickly to any negativity that may happen towards someone else at the home, although this is rare. This means that children live in an inclusive environment, where diversity is celebrated. Children's views are heard through weekly meetings where they pick activities and meals, speak openly about their feelings and share any concerns they may have.

Sanctions are rarely used. Children respond well to the incentive reward scheme in place. This encourages children to work towards their personal goals. There has been no use of physical restraint in the home since 2020. This is achieved through the positive relationships that exist between the children and the staff.

During the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, staff worked hard to help children understand what was happening and to keep them safe. One child said, 'The staff have kept me entertained during lockdown, such as taking me for drives or walks.' Another child said that during the pandemic, the staff 'talked to me a lot and helped calm me down'.

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

Since the previous inspection, a new manager has been registered with Ofsted. Staff feel supported by the manager and receive regular supervision. Staff spoke overwhelmingly positively about working in the home. One staff member said, 'I love my job because everyone shares the same vision and is dedicated to the mission.'

The statement of purpose outlines the organisation's aims and ethos. It describes children being cared for across two houses. During the inspection, it was found that children had stopped staying in one of the houses on site two years ago. Since then, the property has not been maintained to a good standard. The organisation took immediate action to remove this house from their registration.

In the house that remains in use, one bedroom is currently being used to store household items. This makes it unsuitable for children to use. Therefore, the home is not operating in line with the statement of purpose.

External monitoring visits take place on a monthly basis. The independent visitor has announced their visits for the past year. Additionally, there is limited feedback gathered directly from children, staff members, professionals or family members. This is not a rigorous approach to reviewing the quality of care and hinders the manager's ability to learn from independent feedback resulting from unannounced visits.

Children's bedrooms are well presented and personalised to each child. Any urgent repairs in the house are carried out quickly, which ensures children's safety. However, the kitchen in the operational house is not of a good enough standard. The kitchen was identified for refurbishment in 2020, but this has not yet been completed. Additionally, some further medium- to longer-term maintenance matters

have not been resolved or escalated by the manager. This compromises the environment that children are in.

Since the previous inspection there have been two serious events which were not notified to Ofsted in line with regulations. This failure to notify means that Ofsted was unable to have appropriate oversight of actions taken following these incidents.

Management monitoring systems have improved since the previous inspection. However, they are not yet wholly effective. For example, the management oversight of fridge temperature checks had not identified a problem with one fridge. This was addressed during the inspection. This requirement is repeated.

A previous recommendation which related to the quality of children's records has been met. Children's experiences are well documented through words, photos and detailed progress reports.

Staff benefit from varied and relevant learning opportunities, such as training in the mental well-being of children and medication administration. This means that children are cared for by staff who have the right skills to meet each child's needs. This was a previous recommendation and is met.

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
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5))	3 April 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	3 April 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	3 April 2022
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (3))	3 April 2022

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; 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; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))	1 May 2022
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that good food hygiene standards are consistently maintained and that action is taken promptly if there are indicators that a fridge may not be functioning correctly. ('Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 1241023

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Treehouse Educare Limited

Registered provider address: Boldings Brook, Dorking Road, Warnham, Horsham
RH12 3RZ

Responsible individual: David Bishop

Registered manager: Sabina Albert-Gil

Inspector

Anna Williams, Social Care Compliance Inspector

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