

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 that also operates a registered school on the same site. The children's home provides care for up to eight children, across two different homes.

One home provides care for up to four children who may experience social, emotional or mental health difficulties. One home provides care for up to four children who have learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, five children were living at the children's home.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision on this site.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 March 2025

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

Date of last inspection: 21 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2024	Full	Good
14/12/2022	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Full	Good
04/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from care that is kind, caring and consistent. Staff have a calm, clear approach that creates an environment where children can grow in confidence and believe in themselves. This means children with complex histories are helped to build trusting relationships with staff that help them feel safe and engage more positively.

Children have made progress from their starting points. When children experience difficulties, staff help them overcome personal barriers and develop their independence at a pace suited to their individual needs. One child who wants to move to independent living is being helped to learn how to manage, both practically and emotionally. Another child is continuously making small steps of progress that are milestones for them. For example, they have recently planned a special trip to a train museum.

Children are helped to enjoy activities and hobbies they love. One child was supported to go on holiday to Paris, a place that has a special meaning for their family history. Another child is helped to nurture their music talent by having a music teacher and visiting music studios. This means that children's individuality is embraced, valued and nurtured.

Listening to children and celebrating success plays a central role in the home. Children's views are sought and reflected in care plans, where there is a focus on finding opportunities for continuous learning and development. Staff actively work to help children recognise their achievements. For example, one child was presented with two 'EPIC' awards. Another child has successfully secured a placement at a college for animal care. Staff adapt their approach to encourage children to accept positive feedback. This means that children can build their sense of self-esteem and achievement.

Children's attendance at education is mixed. Some children attend regularly, have a positive experience and make progress. One child does not regularly attend college, but is committed to learning and is expected to do very well. One child is not in education due to delays in placements being sought. Managers have escalated their concerns and advocated strongly for this child, so a placement has now been identified.

The homes are beautifully presented, and the environments are welcoming and homely. Children like the bedrooms, which are comfortable and personalised. Staff pets are a part of the home and children love spending time with them. Children enjoy spending time cooking in the spacious kitchens and are guided to take pride in looking after their environment.

Children are supported to safely see people who are important to them. This helps them to positively sustain relationships with their family members and friends.

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

Managers and staff have an in-depth understanding of the risks and factors that influence children's behaviour. Managers work closely with the multi-disciplinary professional team to consider how to reduce risk and develop support strategies for staff to follow. Individual risk plans for children with a range of needs are detailed and up to date. Staff know what to do to keep children safe and they meet children's needs in a consistent and effective manner.

Some children have frequently been missing from home. However, staff are proactive in their efforts to communicate with the children and find them to ensure their safety and well-being. When concerns or risks have heightened for children, managers have escalated their concerns appropriately to seek intervention and support from the child's local authority team and external professionals.

Children are helped to recognise and respond to risky situations more safely. It has been a challenging period for staff and managers, who are committed to quickly responding to high-risk situations to keep children safe. They effectively use the therapeutic model to look at issues from the child's perspective and debrief with the child. This gives children space and time to talk, while enabling them to learn more about themselves and how to manage difficult feelings. As a result, children are starting to make safer choices and there are a low number of restraints. One child has stopped self-harming. One child, who was often upset, now knows how to manage their feelings and is more able to talk to staff.

Allegations made by children are responded to quickly and thoroughly investigated. Managers take action to work collaboratively with children's professional networks to ensure that allegations are always listened to and reported to the relevant people. Staff are supported and risk plans are updated to reflect updated measures to keep children and staff safe.

Managers keep records of incidents and safeguarding concerns. They take prompt action to reduce risks for children. However, records are not always fully completed or sufficiently scrutinised. For example, one incident record where a child may have been missing from care was incomplete. This was not recognised and further investigated by managers. This means there was inaccurate information about the event and follow-up action required was not fully evaluated.

The staff use restrictions to keep children safe from high risks and unhealthy behaviours. However, records for why restrictions are used, and how they will be reviewed, are not in place. In addition, restrictive practices have not been formally agreed with the professional team. For example, children's snacks are kept in the office. Individual arrangements for each child have not been considered. This means the restriction in place impacts other children unfairly. During the inspection, managers made plans for how restrictions would be recorded, reviewed and reduced.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers of the home have an energetic commitment and a passion to help children live in a home where they feel safe and equipped to overcome any challenge they face. There is a strong sense of positivity, care and humour that helps children develop a sense of stability and enables them to try new experiences in a safe and carefully planned way.

Managers are child centred and confident about welcoming children with high levels of needs into the home. There is a strong sense of cohesive teamwork that means staff are empowered to help children with complex behaviours using positivity, empathy and understanding in the face of difficult challenges. Children have tailored care in each home that is underpinned by extensive training and support in place for staff.

Managers place high importance on understanding individual children's needs and monitoring the progress they make. They have ambitions to further develop how children's entire developmental journey is understood and celebrated. This is being achieved through building on training that staff receive and embedding the principles of therapeutic care into practice. This means that staff have an in-depth insight into children's needs and motivations, and managers can understand when support for children is effective, or if children need further help.

Professionals speak positively about the managers, staff and the home environment. They say that staff adapt their approach to suit children's individual needs, and this positively helps children to build trusting relationships. There is good communication between professional networks, including regular updates on children's progress.

Arrangements for addressing practice concerns are good. When serious staff practice issues were identified, managers swiftly addressed this and followed appropriate disciplinary protocols. However, social workers are not always informed when staff misconduct has resulted in a safeguarding risk to children. This means it is not clear if there has been sufficient independent oversight and assessment by the appropriate professionals.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded;	31 March 2025

that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; and

that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(c)(d)(e))

Specifically, the registered person should ensure that incidents are accurately recorded and evaluated by managers.

Incidents where children are at risk of harm, including through staff misconduct, should be reported to the appropriate professionals, and the resulting assessment and outcomes should be clearly evidenced in records.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are recorded and subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and proportionate. This includes ensuring that restrictions required for one child do not impact on others, keeping clear records of why restrictions are in place, and that case managers agree with the arrangements. In addition, that the views of the child, dependent on their age and understanding, are sought and understood. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: Kathleen Dodd

Registered manager: Sabina Albert-Gil

Inspector

Shirin White, Social Care Inspector

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