

1241855

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who have had adverse childhood experiences that may have led to complex trauma-based needs.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2019. The manager has a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 January 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 28 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/02/2023	Full	Good
19/05/2021	Full	Good
10/12/2019	Full	Good
21/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's overall experiences of living in the home are good. Children have positive and trusting relationships with staff. Despite there being some changes to the staff team, children can identify an adult who they can rely on to support them. As a result, some of the children have made great progress in many aspects of their life. One child said, 'I have enjoyed my time in the home, I have learned a lot and I am really pleased with the end result of who I am.'

At the time of the inspection four children were living in the home. One child has lived at the home for over four years and views the staff as part of his extended family. Two children have been welcomed into the home following well-planned transitions. One of these children moved into the home at the time of the inspection. One child has moved out to a foster home in line with their plan and the progress they have made. The child remains in touch with the home and shares updates about their ongoing achievements.

Staff know the children well and understand their hopes and ambitions. They support children to attend their education provision and work hard to overcome barriers for them. One child completed their exams successfully. They attend college, volunteer for a local community organisation and work part time. Another child had limited understanding of the English language. Staff have engaged the child in online courses while they await a school place. This has helped the child to understand and speak English more fluently and to attend a youth and cricket club, where they have made friends.

The holistic health needs of children are promoted well by staff. Children attend routine and specialist health appointments. They are also helped by the organisation's therapist to understand their lived experiences and the trauma they have suffered. One child's social worker said they chose the home due to the therapeutic offer for children.

Children are encouraged to develop their independence skills in line with their plans and needs. Staff work with them formally to complete their independence workbooks. They also support them informally. This helps children to better understand practical aspects of independent living, such as shopping, budgeting and paying bills. As a result of this good practice, one child is waiting to move into a self-contained apartment. They are looking forward to continuing their journey into adulthood.

Diversity, difference and identity are celebrated by staff. Children's religious and cultural needs are well supported. One child attends their place of worship. Children spend time with people who are important to them. Staff have also encouraged two children to rebuild relationships with family members.

The home is spacious and children's bedrooms are personalised. However, damage and wear and tear to two bathrooms have not been promptly or adequately addressed. The manager ensured that this was dealt with during the inspection. Further to this, one child expressed their displeasure at the delay with a tumble dryer being replaced. This takes away from the homely environment the manager and staff work hard to create for children.

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

Routines, boundaries, incentives and regular direct work help children to feel safe and stay safe. This is underpinned by thorough risk assessments and behaviour support plans. These offer staff clear guidance about the risks to children and actions they are to take to manage and reduce these risks. Because of good staff practice, there has been a reduction in children going missing from care and staff having to physically intervene to keep children safe.

When staff had to physically intervene with a child on one occasion, this was appropriately undertaken. The child was offered support to understand what had happened and the reasons why. This was recorded and overseen by the manager. However, there was some confusion in the written record of the incident completed by staff. The manager acknowledges this and has a plan in place to improve this.

One child who moved into the home at the time of the inspection struggled with this change. This led them to go missing from care during their first night. Staff followed the child's plan and tried to search for them. They worked together with the child's family member and other professionals, including the police, to make sure the child returned home safely.

Children know how to make a complaint when they feel the need to. There has been one complaint by a child. The manager responded to this swiftly, resolved the complaint and kept the child updated about the actions taken. The child was satisfied with the outcome.

There have been two medication errors in a short space of time but the impact on children's health has been minimal. The manager identified these errors and acted appropriately to investigate. Additional training was provided for staff. The procedures around the administration and recording of medication have also been enhanced. This includes increased auditing by the manager. This approach is helping to minimise the risk of further errors.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is overseen by an experienced manager who leads by example. This approach provides inspiration for the staff team, whose members speak positively about the manager. A responsible individual supports the manager. Together they have a clear understanding of the home's strengths and areas of development. A deputy manager has also been appointed to support the manager.

Leaders and managers have some good monitoring and review systems in place. This includes a twelve-month plan to upskill the staff team. There have, however, been a few occasions when the manager has not picked up on errors in record-keeping by staff. On one of these occasions, important information about a child's history was not included in a key document that all staff access.

Staff feel well supported by the manager. They receive regular reflective supervision and attend team meetings. They have a range of training courses based on the individual needs of the children and the home's therapeutic approach. The in-house therapist also attends team meetings. They offer guidance and support to staff around children's evolving needs and risks. This helps staff to deliver individualised and consistent care for children in line with the home's statement of purpose.

The manager works effectively with the wider professional network. They are strong advocates for children and do not hesitate to challenge professionals when required. On one occasion, the manager did not move a child into the home until a planned transition was agreed. This meant the child could visit the home and be prepared for the move. One child's social worker said that it has been a pleasure working with the home.

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 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; enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that any damage is repaired promptly in areas of the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	18/03/2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person must ensure that prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Records must be kept of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: 1241855

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Limited, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Lee Matthews

Registered manager: Renee Clarke

Inspector

Nurul Kabir, Social Care Inspector

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