

1249196

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider.

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for no more than four children or young people who may have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Visit dates: 15 to 16 December 2020

Previous inspection date: 28 May 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children are happy and safe in this home. They have strong, caring relationships with the small staff team, which have been maintained despite some recent staff changes. Relationships continue when children move on, giving them a sense of continuity and stability.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have supported children to keep in touch with their friends and family in creative ways. Whenever and as soon as has been possible this has been in person.

Children's health needs are prioritised and staff have supported children well through the many changes required under COVID-19 guidance. Education has been maintained for all of the children, with some of them making additional progress because of learning in the home rather than at school. The staff have used what is at their disposal to keep the children engaged and active, including dog walking and woodwork.

When access to education and statutory services has been reduced by other agencies the manager has advocated strongly and effectively for additional resources and support.

The safety of children

Children are safe and well. Through the COVID-19 pandemic robust hygiene measures have been in place which have become part of the children's daily routine. Children have also been supported to use online platforms safely as their use increases.

Other professionals speak very highly of the home and the progress that the children are making. Strong and frequent communication helps to identify potential risks early. When considering new admissions to the home the manager considers the impact on each child individually.

Staff have supported children through challenging situations because they know them well and there are clear, consistent boundaries in place. Risk factors are considered in depth and reviewed regularly. The staff have a summary for each child that gives them practical strategies for managing risk. The manager has identified that the behaviour support plans require similar streamlining.

There are very few, if any, complaints, incidents, restraints or safeguarding referrals in this home because of effective training, positive relationships and collaboration with other agencies.

Leaders and managers

The interim registered manager has maintained high standards in this home with strong support from senior managers and the rest of the organisation. This is particularly evident in how staff are expected to uphold professional standards of

behaviour. There have been several changes in the staff group over recent months, but this has been managed sensitively, with minimal impact on the children.

The staff team have regular, effective supervision, including those that are new to the home. Training has been maintained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with a blend of online, face-to-face and practical learning that focuses on the needs of the children.

The manager advocates for children, including escalation when statutory rights are not being met.

The manager has made effective use of independent reviews of the home. Children's views are central to both every day and long-term development plans. For example, the development of a dance studio so that the children can continue their interests through lockdown restrictions.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1249196

Registered provider: Headway Adolescent Resources Limited

Registered provider address: Masonic Hall Offices, School Hill, Chepstow, Gwent, NP16 5BZ

Responsible individual: Timothy Corbin

Registered manager: Serena Pike, Louise Mitchell

Inspector

Steve Lowe, Social Care Inspector

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