

1249196

Registered provider: Headway Adolescent Resources Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

Following the last inspection, the previous manager returned to the post and registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 July 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: 23 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2023	Full	Good
26/07/2022	Full	Good
20/07/2021	Full	Good
28/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The new registered manager has spent time updating the home, so it now feels cosy for children, with soft furnishings and new decor downstairs. There are plans to update upstairs and for children to move bedrooms, so they have more space. There are four locked rooms upstairs for which staff carry keys. Although children's bedrooms are not locked, staff carrying keys around can give an institutional feel to the home.

Overall, staff interactions with children are kind, caring and fun. Generally, there are nice conversations, positive encouragement and friendly interactions, apart from recent incidents involving one staff member. Concerns around these interactions have been dealt with appropriately. The majority of staff have built positive relationships with children, which means children enjoy spending time with them, so can feel relaxed and comfortable in their presence.

Staff have good knowledge of children and their needs, demonstrating they know children well and can understand them and provide the right support. Children have made positive progress, particularly in education, and safeguarding incidents have reduced.

Staff support children to understand healthy lifestyles and give them advice and guidance, so children can keep fit and healthy. They consult with health professionals, so children have the right dietary advice to understand which foods are nutritious and good for them.

Children are regularly able to express their views, wishes and feelings. Staff recognise that natural conversations are beneficial and allow children time and space to talk openly. However, staff also have meaningful conversations with children to address any specific issues that arise so they can help them understand and make positive decisions.

Staff recognise that routine and boundaries are important for children but also that children need time to learn for themselves and explore, with support and oversight from staff. Children enjoy gaming and external professionals say staff manage children's time on devices fairly and appropriately, ensuring that start and finish times are timely, especially around dinner and bedtimes.

Staff help children build positive relationships and enjoy quality time with family members and people who are important to them. Children enjoy a range of fun activities outside of the home, including going shopping in town and to the local cinema. Children help staff plan their activities and they enjoy positive time together, for example, they go swimming together and attend the local youth club.

When children move on from the home, staff arrange support for children and stay connected. Staff visit children regularly in their new homes to check on their well-being and see how they are progressing.

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

Children have a range of meaningful conversations and take part in workshops with staff to address concerns including child sexual exploitation, grooming and risky behaviour. Children are confident in understanding risk and ways to keep themselves safe online and in the community.

Staff help keep children safe when they go missing. They search for them and work with others to return them safely home. Behaviour is managed positively and restraint is rarely used, although when it is, it is proportionate and appropriate to keep children safe.

The registered manager has reflected on the use of restraint and made changes in the children's best interests. Staff have completed refresher training to be able to manage stressful situations more effectively, so there is minimal use of restraint and there is a consistent approach during any intervention. There has been a significant decrease in the use of restraint over recent months.

Children receive consequences that are proportionate and include reparation work, so they can learn from their experiences in a positive way and understand how to make amends. Staff then meet with children to check their well-being and to talk through any remaining issues.

Children's records are clear and support staff to understand children's needs and help them to keep safe. Staff use a range of strategies to help children to express themselves safely. Regular reviews ensure that staff are up to date and informed about any changes to the children's plans.

The registered manager deals with staffing issues effectively and swiftly. When concerns arise, they are reported to relevant safeguarding professionals so proportionate steps can be put in place to keep children safe. External professionals comment that staff remain professional throughout incident processes, keeping children's needs at the forefront of decision-making.

Learning from medication errors is actioned effectively by the registered manager and staff receive training to raise understanding so they are aware of the importance of keeping accurate records.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has returned to the home after time spent working elsewhere. She demonstrates a high level of commitment and dedication to children, ensuring they have a loving, stable and nurturing home environment and receive a level of care that

helps them thrive. Staff spend time with children building positive relationships and trust, so children have stability and security in their home.

The registered manager is committed to the staff team and has made positive changes. The staff have a wide range of skills and experience and the registered manager promotes further training and learning opportunities, so staff can be upskilled and widen their expertise, providing children with positive and supportive experiences.

Staff show good understanding of children's likes and dislikes and give positive examples of progress for children, demonstrating improvements in education, behaviour, engagement and confidence. However, the home does not use a model of care, despite external professionals recommending the use of one in children's plans, although staff have access to therapeutic consultation for advice and guidance.

Staff say they have a positive and rewarding experience working in the home and they have built good relationships with children. They say their leaders and managers are approachable and supportive. Although there have been changes that impacted on the home, the new registered manager has implemented good structure and routine and positive changes that have helped children achieve and progress. There are regular staff on each shift, so children can feel settled and receive care and support from a consistent team.

Safer recruitment checks are complete for current staff and records are clear and detailed. However, leaders and managers failed to notice concerns regarding a previous employee, resulting in a safeguarding concern that impacted on children. Leaders and managers took swift and appropriate action and dealt with the matter effectively, minimising any harm to children, but there must be reflection and learning on this to avoid any issues in future.

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. The registered person may permit an individual to start work at the home despite the fact that the requirement in paragraph (3)(d) has not been met if— the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about each of the matters in Schedule 2 in respect of the individual, but the enquiries in relation to any of the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete; full and satisfactory information in respect of the individual has been obtained in relation to the matters in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 2;	24 July 2024

the registered person considers that the circumstances are exceptional; and

the registered person ensures that the individual is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties, pending receipt of any outstanding information on the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2, which is then considered satisfactory by the registered person.

(Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d) (7)(a)(b)(c)(d))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that safer recruitment checks are complete, records are clear and that any previous safeguarding concerns surrounding a potential employee are explored in the best interests of children and to ensure they are kept safe.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home environment is nurturing and not institutional. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children who move into the home receive care specific to their developmental outcomes as outlined in their relevant plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 18, paragraph 3.29)

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: 1249196

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Headway Adolescent Resources Limited

Registered provider address: Malvern View, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove
B60 4AD

Responsible individual: Timothy Corbin

Registered manager: Louise Mitchell

Inspector

Emma Fryer, Social Care Inspector

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