

1252120

Registered provider: Paddock House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to six children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were six children living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke to five of them during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2017.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/06/2023	Full	Good
07/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
15/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three of the children have lived in the home for two to three years. A stable home life has helped them settle and make progress. When a child moves into the home, the manager makes sure that they can live with the children who already live there. An assessment of needs ensures that the staff team can care for the new child and meet their needs. Planned moves help children to cope with the change.

Relationships between the children and staff have improved since the last inspection. Staff show a commitment to the children. More of the children say that they have been getting to know staff and are more comfortable speaking to them when they have things on their mind. This means children have staff that they can turn to when they need to talk, helping them at the time they need support.

Children experience ups and downs in their relationships with each other. Some children say that they do not want to be around each other, preferring to go to their bedrooms. However, there are group activities and holidays taken outside of the home which the children participate in.

All children attend school, alternative education provisions or have a tutor coming to the home. Children receive support from staff with their education. Although some arrangements took time to begin, they are now in place. Therefore, children who have gaps in their education are now learning. Some children have taken their GCSE exams this year and this is a big achievement. Staff are proud and have celebrated with the children.

For those children who smoke cannabis or cigarettes, this has lessened; however, vaping is something that most children do. Currently there is no plan to address this to help educate children about the dangers of vaping. This does not support children to lead healthier lifestyles.

Children are well supported to develop independent living skills to help them prepare for the future. Some children have taken full advantage of the advice on offer from staff and are working towards their targets. This will guide and help to prepare them for adulthood.

Staff take time to speak to and get to know children's family members. They encourage families to spend time with their children and where appropriate family members are welcomed to visit the home. This is important for some children who are close to their families and want to spend more time with them.

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

Staff know the key risks and vulnerabilities for the children well, such as substance misuse, offending behaviour or exploitation. They know what action to take, for example if a child goes missing or if there are concerns about negative behaviour between peers. The staff take extra steps to ensure children are supported when children experience more difficulties, for example checking in on them more often and having conversations about how to keep themselves safe.

Staff support children when they are in crisis, such as when children self-harm. Staff seek appropriate medical treatment and follow advice from professionals. All the children have access to extra emotional support through child and adolescent mental health services to help them talk about and manage their feelings in a better way. Additionally, staff have conversations with the children about worries and concerns they have for their safety. This helps children to know that staff care about them and helps them to understand why staff are worried about their actions.

Staff use their positive relationships with children, together with consequences and rewards, to support children to make better choices. As a result, more restrictive measures such as physical guides or holds are rarely needed. There have been occasions when the manager has been involved in physically holding or guiding a child. When this happens, there is no review of these incidents from a person that was not involved. This means that there is no independent oversight to ensure that the guide or hold is proportionate and used in line with the regulations.

Children do go missing sometimes. Staff follow the children's individual plans and take action to follow, find and contact children when they are away from home. When children are missing for more than two days, the manager asks for a strategy meeting to discuss the safeguarding concern with the wider professional group involved with the child. This helps to coordinate the response to ensure their safety if the child goes missing again.

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

There is a stable staff team with some sessional workers used. Agency staff do not work at the home, which ensures that the children receive consistency of care, with children knowing the staff caring for them.

The manager supports staff by covering for a staff vacancy. The manager is enthusiastic about what he does and wants the best for the children. The manager has good relationships with both the staff and children. However, through supporting staff to care for the children, this takes him away from his management duties at least twice a week. This impacts on his monitoring and oversight of the home. Consequently, the manager was not aware of the shortfalls found at this inspection.

There are gaps in information in written paperwork. For example, a child was missing for several days and the staff's recording does not reflect all the steps taken to find the child and bring them home safely. There are also inconsistencies in the quality and detail in the paperwork. The manager has failed to address this with staff, with the quality impacting on the manager's oversight of staff practice. Furthermore, the details of staff's conversations with children are not always recorded and some daily records are brief. If children want to read their records as adults, they will not have a good understanding of their time living at the home.

The manager receives supervision from the responsible individual. This does not provide the manager with good-quality supervision as the responsible individual does not have the qualification or skills to provide good-quality supervision and to further develop the manager.

Although most staff have a relevant qualification to undertake their role, one member of staff has not been able to provide evidence that they have completed this necessary training. This means that the manager cannot be assured that this staff member is suitably qualified to provide care for the children.

Staff work well together as a team. Staff say that they like working at the home. They feel well supported by the manager. Staff receive supervision and attend team meetings to help staff think about their practice.

Feedback from professionals is positive. They say that the children have good care, and that staff know the children well and try hard for them. The manager and staff's advocacy for the children means that children have the help that they need.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and 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))	20 September 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1) (4)(b)) In particular, the manager must receive supervision with an appropriately qualified person.	20 September 2024
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.	20 September 2024

The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, if the manager is involved in using a measure of control, another appointed person needs to have oversight of these incidents to ensure they are appropriate, and the use of control warranted.	
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). For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b))	20 September 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being to enhance, and supplement that provided by their school through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 34, paragraph 7.18)
- 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. In particular, ensure important information is captured regarding staff actions or conversations with children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1252120

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Paddock House Limited

Registered provider address: B3 Kingfisher House, Team Valley, Gateshead NE11 0JQ

Responsible individual: Susan Lincoln

Registered manager: Steven Miller

Inspector

Miriam Dolman, Social Care Inspector

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