

1257101

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children. The home cares for children with learning disabilities and other associated complex needs, including some physical difficulties. The home provides planned and emergency short- and long-term placements.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in August 2017.

There were two children and one young person aged 18 living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

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: 10 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2023	Full	Good
18/05/2021	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Good
08/01/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The quality of care provided to children at this home is good. Staff place children at the centre of their practice and ensure that children's day-to-day needs are met.

Children are supported to develop strong and trusting relationships with the staff caring for them. They are comfortable and relaxed in the home. Staff are warm and attentive towards children.

Children's health needs are well understood and met. Staff ensure that children take their medication as prescribed. Staff support children to attend medical appointments and ensure that they have access to specialist advice.

Children make good progress in their education. All children attend school. They are also encouraged and supported to develop their independence, such as attending to their personal care, dressing or cooking.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the home, and staff support children and arrange for them to spend time with their family when it is safe to do so.

Children currently living in the home are non-verbal, so they are reliant on staff understanding their needs. Staff demonstrate a good ability to interpret what children are conveying. Staff use a range of tools to communicate with children, including signs, speech and pictures. However, the children's records do not reflect children's input into their care and the decision-making processes very well.

The home is clean, comfortable and decorated to a good standard. There are photos of the children displayed throughout the house. This adds to the homely atmosphere. The registered manager has a plan to create additional facilities, such as a sensory room.

Transition planning for children moving on from the home needs to improve. One young person living in the home is 18 years old. The plan for this young person is to remain in the home until the age of 21. However, there is no clear plan for transition and there are no risk assessments in place for them. Furthermore, the placing authority has failed to provide any evidence that an application has been made for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. This means that there is no clear plan to ensure that this young person's move from the home is planned and that their stay in the children's home is appropriate. Furthermore, no additional training has been provided for staff to ensure that the needs of this young person are fully met.

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

Safeguarding practice is strong. Children's vulnerabilities are well understood by staff. Children's risk assessments consider physical risks and safeguarding issues.

This ensures that staff remain clear about all risks posed to children and the strategies to keep them safe. However, no specific risk assessment has been completed for the young person who is 18, to consider all potential risk factors and how to mitigate them.

Staff have the right training to meet the emotional needs of the children in their care. As a result, they understand the children's behaviours and are able to support them. This helps children to reduce their anxieties and incidents in the home are rare. However, a behaviour support plan has not been completed for one child. This is a missed opportunity to consider all known behaviours for this child and the strategies for staff to support him.

Safeguarding issues are regularly discussed with staff in supervision, using case examples. Staff have a good understanding of whistle-blowing and the procedures to follow if allegations are made against other staff. This helps to ensure that children's safety is prioritised.

Staff are suitably trained to restrain children safely when required. However, there have been no incidents of restraint since the last inspection.

Safer recruitment and employment practices are followed, ensuring that only suitable staff are employed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leadership and management of the home are strong. The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager, supported by a deputy manager. They create a culture where staff strive to make a positive difference to children's lives. There is a stable staff team in place, providing children with stability and a consistent level of care.

Leaders and managers know the home's strengths and areas for development. There are effective monitoring systems in place to ensure that leaders and managers constantly review the quality of care provided to children. However, the quality of care reports completed since the last inspection do not include the views of children living in the home.

Leaders and managers work well with children's professional networks. Feedback from external professionals and parents is positive regarding the quality of care provided and communication from staff. This results in a shared approach to providing children with good-quality care and support.

Staff at the home feel well supported by colleagues and the manager. Regular team meetings and individual supervision provide staff with opportunities to reflect on their practice and share their views and ideas. Safeguarding issues are discussed, as well as staff development needs. However, the quality of performance appraisal is limited by the lack of strong goal setting and lack of incorporation of feedback from external professionals and children.

The recording of complaints needs to improve. A complaint made by one parent was dealt with and resolved. However, there is no record of what actions have been agreed to address the parent's concerns. There was a lack of reflection and no evidence of how leaders and managers learn from negative feedback.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that transition plans are carefully considered and clearly recorded for all children reaching adulthood.	30 November 2023
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—	30 November 2023

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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b)) In particular, this refers to ensuring that a robust risk assessment is completed for the young person who has reached adulthood, to consider all risks arising from that and strategies that staff should take to mitigate them.	
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))	31 January 2024
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child’s needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each	30 November 2023

child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c))

In particular, this refers to senior managers in the organisation escalating concerns to the placing authority to ensure that all appropriate plans are in place for the young adult living in the home, such as Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Recommendations

- The registered person should encourage the use of positive behaviour strategies by staff, in line with the child's relevant plans. In particular, this relates to ensuring that positive behaviour plans are completed for all children living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- The registered person should ensure that children who cannot verbalise their views have their wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. In particular, staff should continuously seek the best tools to communicate with non-verbal children and clearly record their views. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)
- The registered person should ensure that appraisals enable in-depth review of staff's performance, including the views of the supervisor, supervisee and, when appropriate, others. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that they learn from difficulties, proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. In particular, this relates to ensuring that they evidence how complaints are addressed and reflected on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should support staff training needs. In particular, this relates to considering whether additional training should be provided to staff in view of the fact that a young adult lives in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: 1257101

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Cyrinus House, 18 Hatherley Road, Sidcup DA14 4BG

Responsible individual: Emmanuel Akpan

Registered manager: Abisola Sanni

Inspectors

Aneta Wasilewska, Social Care Inspector

Matilda Clode, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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