

1257706

Registered provider: Gravitass Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It offers care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children were spoken with during the inspection.

The previous manager left in November 2023. A new manager was recruited in April 2024, but they have not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 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: 12 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/08/2022	Full	Good
14/06/2021	Full	Good
12/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have established and caring relationships with children, which is evident in the nurturing way staff speak both with and about the children. Professionals commented positively about the quality of the relationships between staff and children in the home.

Children said they are settled living in the home. This provides a good basis for them to gain social and independence skills. Care is tailored to each child by encouraging them to make everyday choices, such as how their bedroom is decorated and what activities they do. This supports children to develop their own identities.

Staff recognise the importance of maintaining family ties, and they will travel long distances with children so that they can see their families and loved ones. This is especially important for children who do not live near their families.

Staff complete and record discussions with children that reflect the child's views and wishes. This helps to validate children's choices and helps staff gain insight into the children's lives. Children have good experiences with staff, and their trips away are fun and enjoyable and have helped to build the trusted relationships with adults.

One child currently refuses to attend their identified school placement. The staff are failing to engage the child in any educational learning, leaving the child with an unmet need. One child receives consistent support to develop their independence skills. This helps to prepare children for when they move on and live with less support from adults.

When children move to the home, this is done in a planned way to help to reduce any stress or upset this can cause. This helps both the child moving in and any children already living in the home. However, one child experienced an unplanned move out of the home. Lessons have not been learned from this child's experiences as the manager has not yet reviewed the circumstances around them leaving.

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

The two children currently living in the home have not been missing from home since the last inspection. Staff maintain their practice knowledge and skills should they need to respond to a missing-from-home incident in the future.

There have been no incidents of children being held for their own or other's safety since the last inspection. Staff manage situations in ways that align with behavioural plans, and this minimises verbal and physical incidents. Infrequently, there has been damage caused when children have become upset or distressed, but on none of

these occasions have children been criminalised by staff involving the police. This leads to a relatively calm environment.

A therapy service is being developed in the home. Although the service is new, the manager feels this is already having a positive outcome on the children's well-being. Staff also benefit from training in childcare theories from the therapist. Staff say this helps them to better understand children's behaviours they find challenging.

Staff are aware of children's vulnerabilities and the ways children need to be kept safe. However, children's individual risk assessments and plans contain inaccuracies, which means that staff are not always working to correct information. Staff share information about the children through verbal updates, and this is reinforced by regular discussions about children's safeguarding in staff supervision sessions.

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

The newly appointed manager is not yet registered with Ofsted. Since her appointment, she has begun to develop and implement systems to support her oversight and respond to the training needs of staff. However, there are still evident shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home.

Staffing instability affects the children and their care experiences, with agency staff frequently needing to be used. On some occasions, newly appointed staff are in charge with support from agency staff. This is problematic as it means children are often cared for by staff who do not know them. Both staff and the children expressed their frustration about staffing arrangements.

The manager has submitted her first six-monthly quality of care review report. The report does not include consultation with stakeholders, and therefore their views are not used to inform the action plan. This is an area for improvement in future reports.

The manager understands the importance of fire safety, but a weekly fire check was missed with no clear understanding if this was a practice or recording issue. In addition, a recent fire evacuation was conducted when both children refused to participate. A follow-up session about their non-participation was planned, but this was not completed. This means that the staff and children are not prepared in the event of a fire emergency.

Although the children who currently live in the home do not go missing from home, one child who no longer lives in the home went missing frequently. Independent return home interviews were not always completed or offered as they should have been. This reduced opportunities to learn what was going on for the child and understand the push and pull factors. The manager is responsible for offering appropriate challenge when these interviews are not provided, and although it was queried by the manager, it was not sufficiently escalated.

Since the last inspection, the provider has failed to notify Ofsted of a serious incident. This does not provide the regulator with opportunities to assess whether safeguarding practice in the home is satisfactory. This requirement will therefore be restated.

Supervision sessions are regular, reflective and well recorded. Staff say they benefit from supervision sessions and appreciate the opportunity to reflect on their practice. The home's therapist is introducing group clinical supervision sessions so that staff understand how to support the children most effectively.

Staff work effectively to meet children's cultural needs. Children are supported to attend faith settings, follow specific diets and celebrate religious festivals. The manager is working with other professionals to secure a place at a faith school for one child. This helps children develop an identity appropriate to their cultural background and beliefs.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e))	31 July 2024
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access	31 July 2024

educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iv)(viii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children's learning needs are understood and that effective support is in place while children are waiting to begin school or education.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— 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 child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (b)(c)) In particular, the registered person must offer appropriate challenge when any professionals involved with the children fail to deliver services to meet children's needs, and they must escalate any concerns accordingly when needed.	31 July 2024
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	31 July 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children feel safe and are safe. Weekly fire checks are part of this. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety, both inside and outside the home, to the extent that any

good parent would. Staff should help children to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. This includes ensuring that children know what to do in the event of a fire through participation in fire drills or following up on their non-participation. Records of these drills should make it clear that everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

- The registered person should actively seek independent feedback about, and scrutiny of, the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned, ensuring the reports are shared with the regulator in a timely manner and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should note that as well as longer-term support for children to move on from the home effectively (regulation 6(2)(b)(vi)), the home has an important role in supporting each child leaving the home in the period immediately before their departure. The registered person should work with the placing authority to ensure that each child's transition is planned and help each child to prepare for leaving, both practically and emotionally. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)
- 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. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('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: 1257706

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gravitas Care Limited

Registered provider address: 1-3, Annes Place, Pellon Lane, Halifax HX1 5RB

Responsible individual: David Ayres

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Inspector

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