

1258831

Registered provider: Arc-HD Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to three children who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The staff are referred to as 'carers' in this report, as this is the term used by the home. Two children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 19 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2024	Full	Good
27/09/2022	Full	Good
27/01/2022	Full	Good
04/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

This large home meets the needs of the children. The children choose how their bedrooms are decorated and have ample room for their personal belongings. Children make use of the communal areas; one room has a games console and another has been turned into a cosy snug area. One child has well-looked after pet stick insects. The office detracts from the homely feel of the home and some areas of the home are in need of a refresh. The registered manager was present throughout the inspection. Both children were seen, and one child had a conversation with the inspector.

Carers recognise the benefits of children having positive relationships with their families. They support children to spend quality time with their loved ones in the home and in the community. Carers build relationships with children's family members, understanding that this benefits the children. When children have expressed wishes to spend time with different family members, carers have worked with other professionals to make this happen. However, when family time is supervised by carers, they do not always have the information they need to ensure that children are safe. Risk assessments and safety planning for supervised family time for one child were not completed to provide carers with clear guidance.

Carers understand the importance of working with other professionals. One professional said that carers communicate well with them and their colleagues and support a child to attend meetings. Carers share essential information about children's day-to-day lives, education, behaviours and risks with other professionals. However, for one child, when there was a delay in receiving a response, or there was no response at all from professionals, carers did not follow this up or escalate their concerns promptly.

Carers encourage children who do not attend formal education provisions to take part in informal learning. They attend activities in the community, such as music lessons, and go to local wildlife parks. Carers seek children's views in relation to their educational needs and aspirations and advocate for them in meetings.

Carers have carried out extensive work around diet and nutrition with one child. Their ongoing commitment to this work has led to some beneficial changes. However, planning to support a child to develop a healthy sleep pattern and routine has not been effective. External factors that have negatively impacted carers' ability to support the child to have good routines and boundaries have not been challenged effectively.

Carers monitor children's mental health. Concerns are raised with the commissioned mental health nurse, who provides focused support and guidance to carers. Children have benefited from her input into their care planning.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

One child said that they feel safe and can talk to carers if they have any worries. They said that they have everything that they need and get on with the other child who lives in the home. Children go to carers to have their needs met and receive positive responses. They are supported to read their support plans and to record their views. This shows an element of transparency in the home.

Children's behaviours and risks are identified and understood by carers. Planning to manage and reduce risks is of good quality. Carers help children to talk about their past and present experiences. This allows carers to gain a fuller understanding of what is going on for children. However, they do not always encourage children to reflect on their actions or experiences following an incident. This has led to missed opportunities to engage children in valuable learning and to explore their decisions, experiences and feelings.

The children are settled and incidents rarely take place. Restraint has been used, appropriately, on one occasion. Some records that detail children's and carers' actions during incidents, particularly when children go missing from home, lack information and detail. Carers initially responded appropriately when two children went missing from the home. However, they stopped the search when contact was lost and delayed picking them up when they were located during the night, leaving them at risk of harm.

Carers have been aware of some difficult dynamics between the children. In response to the concerns, safety planning has been implemented with the aim of safeguarding all children. Managers have reflected on the reasons for the difficulties and have implemented learning. However, action was not taken to address a report of bullying in the home.

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

Since the last inspection, a new manager has been registered with Ofsted. She is visible in the home. She has built positive relationships with the children and carers and puts the best interests of children first. The registered manager works closely with the responsible individual to devise care and safety planning. There has been a recent expansion of the management team to include a deputy manager and three senior care workers.

Leaders and managers complete regular reviews to monitor the children's progress. This feeds into care planning for children. However, important information about children gets lost in a disjointed recording system. Management oversight is rarely recorded on documents that detail incidents, episodes of going missing from home, important conversations and records of children's day-to-day lives. One outcome of this is that a safeguarding concern was not picked up and addressed. The oversight that there is, lacks reflection, analysis and actions.

Carers provided positive feedback about the home and the support that they receive from their managers. They said that leaders and managers are approachable. They say they have positive working relationships with their co-workers, which supports a positive working environment.

Carers reported that supervision meets their needs. However, written records show that they do not receive it on a regular basis or in line with company policy. Records of supervision are brief and lack reflection, and they show limited discussion about children and practice. Managers rarely provide carers with reflective conversations following incidents or when they have experienced challenges. This raises the risk of carers not receiving the support that they need, and not identifying positive practice or practice concerns.

Team meetings take place regularly. Written records show that the running of the home and the children are discussed. However, details of the discussion and any resulting reflection as a team are not documented. Actions to improve practice are rarely identified and reviewed.

Leaders and managers listen to children and take the concerns that have been raised seriously. When necessary, information is shared with external professionals and additional advice and guidance are sought. Investigations that are carried out are robust, leading to effective outcomes. Managers communicate with children throughout the process.

All carers receive training identified as mandatory by the organisation. Carers have access to additional training which allows them to expand their knowledge and skills.

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 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— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that carers who support children to attend family time have all the information they need to ensure that children are safe. This includes clear	4 January 2025

guidance and agreements with the local authority in relation to their role, the risks and how any risk must be managed. In addition, the registered person must ensure that prompt and effective action is taken to ensure children's safety when they are missing from home. In addition, the registered person must ensure that all concerns in relation to safeguarding children and bullying in the home are recognised and fully investigated and appropriate action is taken to ensure the well-being and safety of children. In addition, the registered person must ensure that children are supported to have reflective and supportive conversations after incidents.	
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that delays in receiving responses from other professionals are chased effectively.	4 January 2025

In addition, the registered person must ensure that barriers that prevent carers from providing children with the care and boundaries that they need are addressed effectively.

In addition, the registered person must ensure that leaders and managers have oversight of all information about children. Oversight must be reflective and provide carers with clear action and direction.

In addition, the registered person must ensure that all carers receive reflective practice-based supervision and timely and thorough debriefs. Actions from supervision and debriefs must be clear and specific and be reviewed.

Recommendations

- The registered person should review the need for having a formal office in the home and consider ways to provide a less institutional environment. In addition, they should ensure that the home is kept in a good state of repair. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- ▢ The registered person should ensure that the home's policies and procedures are followed to ensure that children who live there benefit from them. In particular, the registered person should ensure that documents detailing team meetings show the discussion and reflection that takes place. Also, that any actions resulting from team meetings are identified and reviewed to ensure that they have been completed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)

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: 1258831

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Arc-HD Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Arc-HD Services, Wessex House, Upper Market Street, Eastleigh SO50 9FD

Responsible individual: Lee Roberts

Registered manager: Jessica Smith

Inspector

Carla Simkiss, Social Care Inspector

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