

1259061

Registered provider: Outbound Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider.

It is registered to provide care for up to two children with social and emotional needs, and/or learning disabilities.

Two children are currently being cared for by this home. The inspectors spoke with both children during this inspection.

The registered manager is suitably experienced and has been in post since 23 October 2024.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 February 2025

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: 20 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/09/2023	Full	Good
08/02/2023	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Good
19/12/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive relationships with the adults that care for them. Staff prioritise their time with children and get to know them well. Children feel valued and cared for.

Staff support children to access hobbies and interests that they have a passion for, for example, computer gaming, cooking, and snooker. Staff show an interest in and get involved in children's hobbies. Children can show off their talents and skills.

Staff take children on holidays abroad. Children are provided with special experiences and happy memories of their childhood. For one child, this experience enabled them to build more positive relationships with their staff.

Staff support children to take age-appropriate risks. Where possible, staff support children to learn and make informed choices about their lives. When children say that the boundaries are too restrictive, staff carefully consider risk and allow children to have greater independence where appropriate. Children are developing the skills for adulthood.

The home is well decorated and well furnished. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms according to their taste and personality as soon as they move in. Staff try and encourage children to use communal areas by adapting them to their needs, such as creating a sensory space. Repairs and redecoration are completed promptly. Children are relaxed and comfortable in their home.

Children with a suitable school place attend school regularly. When children do not have a suitable school, staff advocate for them to have appropriate education arrangements in place. Staff support children to learn in the home. Managers and leaders challenge other agencies when children do not have current plans that meet their needs. Staff liaise closely with education staff to support children's learning. Children make progress from their individual starting points.

Managers and leaders ensure that children have access to specialist support services, such as those for mental health. For one child, this included funding private therapy when support could not be gained from statutory services in a timely way. Staff support children to engage with specialist professionals and facilitate their appointments. Children's emotional health and wellbeing has improved as a result.

Managers and leaders work closely with placing authorities and families to ensure that children have positive endings to their time in the home. Managers and leaders ensure that plans are flexible, child-focused and extend transitions when it is in children's best interests.

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

Staff understand the risks to children and manage them well. Risk assessments are clear and regularly updated. However, risk assessments lack specific strategies for staff to follow when faced with immediate risk. A recommendation has been made in relation to this.

Staff rarely impose formal consequences for children. Where possible, staff manage behaviour through their relationships and by educating the children. When formal consequences are used, they are restorative, fair, and directly linked to the behaviour. Managers have prompt oversight of consequences to ensure they are proportionate. Staff seek the children's views on their consequences to ensure they understand them. Consequences promote positive behaviour in the home.

On limited occasions, staff have contacted the police to assist them to manage behaviour. Staff work hard to avoid behaviour escalating. When police are called, it is proportionate to the risk faced by children or staff. Managers and leaders have prompt oversight of any police call outs. They work hard to understand children's behaviour and identify any learning from staff practice.

There have been no allegations about the staff in the home. When children make allegations about others, the manager responds swiftly to safeguard children and informs relevant professionals. The manager takes effective action to ensure the home is a safe place to be.

Children know how to complain if they need to and are confident that staff would respond. Staff offer children the opportunity to complain whenever there are incidents in the home, such as children being held.

Staff are trained to hold children safely if this is necessary. Staff use their knowledge and skills to avoid holding children. When children are held by staff, this is a last resort and proportionate to the circumstances. Managers speak to staff and children after holds to gain their views.

The home has audible door alarms fitted to children's bedrooms. Managers and leaders do not switch the alarms on unless there is a clear safeguarding reason to do so. Managers ensure that children are aware of the alarms and the reasons they have been activated. Managers regularly review the use of door alarms and discuss with placing authorities. Children are offered as much privacy and dignity as possible.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is also registered at another home within the organisation. The manager is present in this home most days. The manager is supported by a committed and experienced deputy manager. Children have positive relationships with the managers and trust that they would respond to any of their worries or concerns.

Managers ensure that staff have regular, reflective supervision that focuses on developing their practice. Managers assign staff research tasks that they present to the team. This develops staff individually and as a group. The emotional impact of their work is recognised and managed well by leaders and managers.

Managers provide staff with comprehensive training. Managers invite specialists to teach the staff when they require additional knowledge, such as training related to autism. Staff are well prepared to meet the needs of the children they care for.

There have been several new staff over the inspection period. However, new staff have been introduced gradually and disruption to the children has been minimised. Staff are recruited safely. The manager does not use agency staff.

Managers and leaders have effective oversight of the home. Managers understand what children are communicating with their behaviour and how to support it. Managers carefully review staff practice, identify any learning, and ensure that staff learning needs are met. This leads to continual improvement of the service for children.

Managers and staff usually inform the regulator promptly of any serious incidents. However, on one occasion they failed to notify the regulator when a child was missing for a long period. On another occasion, a notification was delayed. This prevents the regulator from having current and effective oversight of all serious incidents. A recommendation has been made in relation to this.

Managers ensure that the plans for children comprehensively identify their needs. Managers ensure that they have the relevant placing authority documents and that internal plans align with these. Leaders and managers understand the progress children are making in relation to their plans and where they need additional support.

Leaders and managers have positive relationships with those in the children's professional networks. They ensure that the professionals have the information they need to make decisions and provide informed care in their settings. This enables the best possible joined-up care for the children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Risk assessments should contain the steps the staff should take to manage immediate risk. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. This includes notifying the regulator when children are missing for long periods. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.3)

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: 1259061

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Outbound Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Metropolitan Business Park, Preston New Road,
Blackpool FY3 9LT

Responsible individual: Ian Chadwick

Registered manager: Suzanna Hargreaves

Inspectors

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector
Jon Dutton, Social Care Inspector

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