

1259547

Registered provider: Semi-Independent House Limited

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager is on maternity leave. An acting manager has been appointed.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 February 2022

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: 12 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2019	Full	Good
27/02/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child living at the home is making good progress. The staff know him well and understand his needs. Quality time is spent with the child. This has helped him to build trusting relationships with staff.

Staff encourage the child to share his ideas for the home. He recently had a bedroom makeover, which he helped design. He is listened to, which makes him feel valued. The child is encouraged to take part in discussions and meetings about his care. This helps the child to be involved in decision-making, and to have his voice heard.

The child attends a special school which is over an hour away from home. A reduced timetable is in place, which is tailored to meet his emotional needs. The placing authority is exploring an alternative provision where additional therapeutic intervention would better meet the child's needs. Staff provide excellent support to help the child to participate in his education. Relationships between the home and educational professionals are good, and this close working relationship is helping to identify the right education provision for the child.

The child enjoys fun activities each week. Staff help him to develop his individual interests and talents. He has a passion for football and plays in a local disability team. He is a keen swimmer and wants to learn to dive, which the staff are encouraging of. He is very proud of his achievements. Playing sport has improved the child's social opportunities and his self-esteem.

Staff support the child to manage lifelong health conditions. He is supported to attend all health appointments. He can now self-administer some medication, which promotes his independence. The staff have developed effective relationships with a number of specialist health professionals to promote good health outcomes.

A play therapist commissioned by the home is suitably trained and experienced. Staff benefit from monthly therapeutic consultation. The focus of the model is building strong playful relationships. This has resulted in the staff understanding how trauma impacts children's social and emotional development, and this understanding is improving their care of the child.

The child had not seen his parents for a considerable time when he moved into the home. With careful planning and effective liaison with his social worker, the child now enjoys regular visits to his family. Staff have worked sensitively with parents to rebuild this important relationship. The child's parents feel that staff keep them involved in their child's life, which they are grateful for. One parent said: 'We've never felt so involved with our child in the years he's been away from us.'

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

Safeguarding practice in the home is good. The staff understand how to keep the child safe. The child has consistent daily routines with boundaries, which means incidents are minimal.

There are no current risks associated with the child offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, going missing from care or self-harming. Individual risk assessments are kept up to date in order to set out the action to be taken if vulnerabilities are identified.

Staff consistently promote positive behaviour. They use effective strategies which are specific to the child's needs. The use of play is strong in the home and can often distract from any negative behaviours. The child has never been physically restrained here. Sanctions used are monitored by the manager and encourage children to be accountable for their actions.

The child enjoys spending time online at home. He has access to a computer and a games console. Staff understand the risks the internet may pose for children. Supervision online ensures that the child is safe from risks such as bullying or exploitation.

Investigations into allegations are handled quickly by the home. The child's safety is paramount within such investigations. There is good communication with the local authority designated officer. The home ensures that support is given to the subject of the investigation. Staff who return to work following any investigation are offered additional supervision and support. This ensures that matters are dealt with fairly and in line with statutory guidance.

The home is located on a busy main road within a town centre. Any risks associated with this, such as exploitation and affiliation with gangs, are carefully considered. The manager ensures that this forms part of any decisions made about new children arriving at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is on maternity leave. The deputy manager recently became the acting manager. She is suitably experienced and is working towards a level 5 diploma. Senior managers have been supportive during this time of change and provide additional management oversight to the home.

The home is staffed and resourced to meet the child's needs. A number of staff left the home last year during the pandemic. The use of relief staff and staff from other homes ensured continuity of care for the children. This has since improved with a number of vacant posts now successfully recruited to.

The acting manager has effective monitoring systems in place in order to develop the home. She is ambitious and wants to ensure the best possible care for children. Feedback from others is welcomed and used as learning opportunities. Professionals and parents speak positively about communication from the home and being kept informed about their child's progress.

Supervision of staff is effective. This is received regularly and is focused on the child's needs and care. Team meetings are well attended and provide opportunity for reflection and learning from one another. The staff speak highly of the acting manager and describe a supportive culture in the home.

The management team ensures that the physical environment of the home is safe and maintained to a good standard. The child has contributed to ideas for decoration and furnishing. Any wear and tear issues are quickly repaired by skilled staff who enjoy home improvement tasks.

One child did not settle into the home last year. He moved out following a short period in the home. The management team challenged the placing authority when they were slow to respond to this matter. This ensured that the next steps were taken quickly in the child's best interests. To ensure the safety of all children during this time, additional staff worked in the home and waking night staff were introduced, which is good practice.

A recommendation made at the last inspection is considered met. The home has incorporated into the organisation's policies, procedures, and statement of purpose the need for additional supervision sessions during the probation period. This is no longer a shortfall in practice.

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: 1259547

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Semi-Independent House Limited

Registered provider address: 51 Ploverly, Peterborough PE4 6HZ

Responsible individual: Amanda Charlie

Registered manager: Rebecca Bushell

Inspector

Rachael Sprigg, Social Care Inspector

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