

1259551

Registered provider: Semi-Independent House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home. The home provides care for up to five children who have experienced trauma and have complex needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2022.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 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: 25 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/05/2021	Full	Good
06/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/07/2019	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress. The core staff team have remained consistent and have high aspirations for the children. Since the last inspection, five children have moved out and two children have moved in to the home. Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. The children enjoy a range of positive experiences and are well cared for by the nurturing staff team.

Both children attend school full time and achieve high attendance levels. The children have such good daily routines that they get themselves ready for school without prompting. Staff support the children to attend by either transporting them or communicating with the transport providers to ensure that the journey goes smoothly. Children know that staff want their day to go well.

Activities and hobbies are encouraged. Children enjoy going to the cinema, playing golf and football, paintballing and shopping. One of the children has a passion for cars. He collects toy cars and likes being in cars. The child said, 'I really enjoy going out for drives with staff. When I play with my cars, they join in. I like that. This home is a happy home.'

Children are supported to learn a range of appropriate independence skills. These include general housekeeping tasks, daily personal hygiene and learning how to use free time responsibly. Learning these skills helps children to gain confidence and prepares them for semi-independent living.

Staff support the children to keep in regular contact with the people who are important to them. Good organisation and communication with the children's families ensure that family visits are well planned, supported and enjoyed.

The staff recognise the benefits of pet therapy. Two guinea pigs live at the home, and both children are actively involved in caring for them. The children take turns in feeding them and cleaning out their cage. The children enjoy this responsibility and look after them well.

The home has undergone much improvement and is homely and well maintained. The children's bedrooms are personalised. A new kitchen has been fitted and new flooring has been laid. All of the rooms have been redecorated and the children were included in helping to choose the new colours.

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

Children say that they feel safe living at the home. Staff take the time to develop good relationships by regularly having conversations with the children. They listen to their opinions and the children recognise that staff care about their feelings and are committed to keeping them safe.

There have been no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection. Staff undertake the required training and take their duty to protect children seriously. Staff have a very good understanding of the procedures to follow and the whistle-blowing policy.

Children's risk assessments are of good quality. They are concise and include the child's opinions. They describe the individual child's vulnerabilities and specific ways of working with the child to manage associated risks. This helps staff to recognise triggers and take appropriate action to keep the child safe.

Each child has an individual missing-person protocol. These guide staff on the actions to take to ensure the child's safe return. Staff follow procedures well and are proactive in locating the child. Staff have conversations with the child on their return to help the child to understand the dangers of going missing. However, independent return-home interviews for children have not been requested by the manager. This does not ensure that children are given the opportunity to speak freely with an independent person who is not connected to the home.

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to safeguard the children and others. Staff are skilled at de-escalating incidents. There have been two physical interventions since the last inspection. The manager has reviewed the incidents and gained the views of the child. However, the manager was involved in one of these incidents. This means that there is a lack of independent scrutiny, which potentially compromises the integrity of the review.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The previous manager left in March 2022 and the new manager started in April 2022. He holds a relevant level 5 qualification and became the registered manager in September 2022. He is dedicated, child focused, and respected by the staff team.

The running of the home is very well organised. The managerial monitoring of the home is comprehensive. Routines are in place and consistent care is provided. Weekly reports evidence the positive impact of care on the children's development.

The manager has built very good relationships with professionals and parents. All parents and professionals spoken with commented on the high level of communication and partnership working. Social workers said that they receive good-quality, detailed reports and incidents are reported quickly. A parent said, 'The level of communication is great. I am very much included. I feel that we are working together. I appreciate that I am listened to.'

The monthly staff meetings are structured and informative. They provide a forum for staff to discuss the progress made by children and to develop strategies to meet the ever-changing needs of the children.

Staff receive annual appraisals and regular good-quality supervision that enables them to reflect on their practice and any future development needs. This results in staff feeling valued and well equipped to care for the children.

The manager has met the two requirements and one recommendation raised at the last inspection.

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, 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 registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, ensure that any review, monitoring or debriefs following an incident are carried out by people who are not directly involved in the specific incident being reviewed.	6 February 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return-home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

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: 1259551

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: Gavin Willmott

Inspector

Lynne Drage, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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