

# 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. It provides care for up to 5 children with social and emotional difficulties.

Since the last inspection, 2 children have moved into the home and 2 children have moved out. There were 2 children living at the home at the time of the inspection, and both children were spoken to.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

### Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2025

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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|                                                             |                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

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:** 28 October 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 28/10/2024      | Full            | Good                 |
| 13/02/2024      | Full            | Good                 |
| 06/12/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 25/05/2021      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

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

Children have mixed experiences of living at the home. Some children have experienced an unsettled period. Managers have failed to consider the admission process properly. The impact assessment before the admission of the most recent child to move in did not adequately consider the needs of the existing children. As a result, the group dynamics of the move increased risks for children. Staff were unable to prevent situations that led to significant incidents.

Two children did not experience a stable home. One child lived at the home for a very short period. During this time, this child was frequently missing from home with another child. During these periods, the 2 children were exposed to substance and alcohol misuse, and one of them suffered harm during an assault. These 2 children moved out of the home. One moved out in a planned way and the other in an unplanned way, which led to further disruption

The 2 children currently living at the home have experienced stability and are making progress in their lives. The children have lived at the home for more than 2 years. Social workers highlighted the positive impact that staff's support has had on the children's social and emotional development.

Staff have good relationships and develop warm, nurturing relationships with children. Observations show positive interactions between staff and children, including play and laughter. The children can name adults who they feel close to.

Staff prioritise children's education. Staff transport children to and from school. Staff have regular conversations and encourage children to attend school. Staff stay at the school to support the child with their emotions. Leaders and managers advocate for education that is in line with children's needs. This has led to improved attendance after moving to an alternative provision.

The children are valued, and they influence the running of the home. Children participate in varied activities in line with their interests. Staff support children to spend time with important people in their lives. One child has an advocate who is supporting them in expressing their preferences for post-18 accommodation arrangements.

Staff support children with learning independence skills such as budgeting, preparing meals and personal hygiene. Children are making progress that is personal to them. For example, one child is now able to recall their home address and can contact emergency services if needed.

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

Managers have failed to consider the effect children could have on each other. New children moved to the home despite known risks. As a result, staff failed to manage and contain the increased risks for 2 children. These children have influenced each other, and this has made them unsafe.

Staff have not followed the children's relevant plans to keep them safe. Leaders and managers failed to implement one child's court-ordered restrictions to prevent the child from going missing. This child was frequently missing from home and exposed to significant risk. A social worker said that it was a time in their life with a high number of missing-from-home episodes.

Shortfalls in staff conduct have exposed children to further risk. On one occasion, 2 staff members took 2 children at high risk of going missing out late at night. During this incident, the children allege that staff failed to model appropriate routines and socially acceptable behaviour. The manager quickly reviewed practice with staff, suspended the staff involved and shared the information with the local authority safeguarding officer.

Staff have failed to be vigilant in the supervision of one child. A staff member went to collect the child after a period of being missing. When the child requested to use the toilet, the staff member stopped in an area associated with the child's absences, resulting in the child going missing again.

Staff failed to prevent children from going missing. However, when children leave the home, staff follow clear protocols. They follow children and notify relevant professionals. Staff facilitate for children to have return home interviews.

Staff have conversations with children on topical issues such as understanding emotions, socially appropriate behaviour, safe touch and online safety. Staff support one child to access activities in the community and manage their risks.

Restraint is carried out only when necessary and by staff who are trained. All the incidents are clearly recorded. Staff use creative communication strategies to seek the child's views in ways that they can understand. The children share their feedback following restraint incidents. Managers quickly speak with staff involved and identify learning.

**The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager has suitable experience and is working towards the relevant qualification. She is ambitious for children and has a good understanding of the weaknesses at the home. She is dedicated to making the necessary improvements. Leaders and managers have identified shortfalls highlighted at this inspection and have a plan in place to address these.

Staff feel well supported and are provided with regular supervision sessions. Each member of staff has identified individual development goals that they are working towards. These are regularly reviewed to monitor progress. Managers challenge poor practice and respond quickly to practice concerns. They prioritise children's safety by quickly sharing relevant information with professionals and initiating timely investigations. Team meetings are held regularly, and these are an avenue for further staff development.

Leaders and managers have good working relationships with professionals. This approach is reflected in positive feedback from professionals. Leaders and managers advocate well on behalf of children.

Staff access training that focuses on the needs of children. Most of the staff members have a relevant level 3 qualification. However, for one staff member the required time frame for undertaking this qualification has passed.

Some of the children's records are not up to date. There are incorrect dates and records that are not signed. This limits the factual accuracy of children's records.

## 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        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.<br/>(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii))</p> | 5 January 2026  |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 8 December 2025 |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |               |
| <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.<br/>(Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p> | 31 March 2026 |

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's case records are kept up to date. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, 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:** 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:** Shayne Roberts

## Inspector

Priscilla Koroka, Social Care Inspector

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