

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 June 2017.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 May 2021

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: 6 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/07/2019	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/01/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were five children living at the home at the time of inspection. The children are settled and making good progress in all areas of their lives. They are cared for by a committed staff team that knows them well.

The children and staff recently returned to the home following a fire at the property. The manager put in place appropriate arrangements for all the children while they were unable to reside at the home. The staff offered the children consistency of care during this period. As a result, the children managed exceptionally well with the changes, although all the children said that they are happy to be home.

Staff have supported two children to move on to independent living since September 2020. Both young adults keep in contact with the staff and visit the home on occasion. This is testament to the lasting relationships that the staff established while caring for the children.

Staff enjoy spending time with the children. They make sure that the children can follow hobbies and try new things. This provides children with the opportunity to learn new skills, increase their self-esteem and to have fun doing the things that interest them.

Children are encouraged to spend time with family and friends. This is supported by staff when needed. Children are also able to meet with friends independently when safe to do so.

Staff provide excellent support to help children attend and participate in education. One child, who was out of school, is now attending full-time education. Staff have supported one child to move on from school to college. This required a high level of planning. Staff provided practical and emotional support to help the child feel able to manage the change and get to a point at which they would enter the premises. This child is now regularly attending and engaging in education with a staff member present.

Staff are sensitive to children's individual identity needs. They work well with external professionals to help ensure that the children's needs are met. Staff support children to take part in meetings and attend appointments. This helps children to be involved in decision-making and to have their voices heard.

The manager and staff have recently decorated areas of the home. Children's bedrooms are personalised with new carpets. The kitchen is the hub of the home, where children eat and spend time with each other and staff. The kitchen has had some recent redecoration, but the cooker and the flooring look worn, as do the downstairs toilet and carpet on the stairs.

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

Staff are consistent in helping children to follow their daily routines and with implementing boundaries. Consequently, there are minimal incidents. When incidents do occur, staff ensure that children are able to share their views as part of a debrief meeting. This helps staff and children to think about anything that they could do differently in the future to avoid incidents recurring.

There have been two physical restraints since September 2020. When restraint is used, it is proportionate and used to keep everyone safe. Staff are curious about any changes in a child's behaviour and have engaged with other professionals to help identify what additional support can be offered to children to reduce their anxieties and meet their sensory needs.

Children feel safe. They have trusting relationships with staff who they feel they can talk to. This helps children to communicate their feelings verbally and to accept the guidance that staff are giving them.

Staff undertake training that is relevant to the children they are caring for. This helps them to understand the children and keep them safe.

Staff have a good understanding of the risks for each child. They implement practices that keep children safe. However, risk assessments do not always contain the most up-to-date actions that staff are taking to reduce risks of a child smoking and buying prescription medication, or on children accessing each other's rooms.

Recruitment checks are thorough for permanent staff joining the team. There are some omissions for agency members of staff in relation to gaps in employment and employment history. This does not provide the manager with all the information that she needs to assess the suitability of these staff before they work at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a manager who knows the home's strengths and weaknesses and has a detailed knowledge of the children's needs. The manager offers a high level of availability to the staff and children and role models good practice in her communication with the children.

Staff feel well supported by the manager and are confident in her leadership. There is a strong feeling of cohesion within the team.

The manager has empowered staff to meet the needs of the children and to form positive relationships with the team around the child. This was reflected in the very positive feedback received from professionals and a parent.

There is effective management oversight of all incidents involving children. When the manager is involved in incidents, objective oversight is provided by the head of care.

The manager is a strong advocate for the children. There are examples of professional challenge that have resulted in further review of planning for children.

The manager responded effectively to the fire incident. She facilitated thoughtful planning to minimise the disruption to the children. The manager worked tirelessly to prepare for the children's return and to ensure that the staff and children retained relationships and spent time together during the period that they were away from the home. This included coming together to celebrate one of the children's birthdays.

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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that risk assessments for children contain all identified risks.	28 June 2021
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))	28 June 2021

In particular, the provider must ensure that all required recruitment checks are undertaken for agency staff members.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of children. They should ensure that the maintenance of the fixtures and fittings and decoration of the kitchen and downstairs toilet are completed and that the stair carpet is replaced. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: Ganene Maycroft

Inspector

Paula Edwards, Social Care Inspector

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