

# 1269505

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately run home offers support, education and therapeutic care for up to four children who may have experienced neglect, abuse or trauma which has left them vulnerable. The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in January 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 9 to 10 May 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 3 January 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** declined in effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement      |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 03/01/2019      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness |
| 25/09/2018      | Full            | Good                      |

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

This is a good home. The children feel safe and valued.

There are strong relationships between the children and the staff. The children said that they feel cared for and listened to by the staff. These relationships are the foundations from which the children make progress.

The children have made improvements in their education. Two children attend the organisation's school full time. This is a significant improvement on their starting points. Another child said, 'I hadn't been going to school for ages, but the staff worked with me and encouraged me, and I started going full time.'

The staff consult the children at weekly meetings and through individual conversations. The children feel listened to and they communicate well with the staff. A social worker said, 'She wants to stay there until she reaches independence. The staff really listen to what she says and act on it. I know that this is important to her.'

The staff help the children to see their families and friends. Sometimes, this involves travelling long distances to ensure that these relationships continue. The staff encourage the children's friendships outside the home and encourage links with community groups, such as the local church. This broadens children's social opportunities and increases their feeling of being part of the community.

The children participate in a broad range of activities at the home and in the community. Staff's involvement with these activities enhances the strong relationships between the staff and the children.

The home is in a picturesque setting. It is well decorated throughout, and the children can decorate their rooms as they wish. However, the staff lock various rooms during the day and night, so the children do not have free access to all areas of the home. The rationale for locking rooms is not assessed or recorded in enough detail in the home's risk assessment.

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

The children said that they feel safe. They have staff with whom they can talk if they need to. The children all said that the staff listen to them. The staff are trained in safeguarding and know how to raise any safeguarding concerns.

Children rarely go missing from the home. If they do, the staff follow clear missing-from-home guidelines. They follow the children and, if they lose sight of them, search the local area. The children's missing-from-home risk assessments are proportionate. The staff develop these assessments in partnership with placing authorities.

The staff support children to develop their understanding of risk. Discussion and reflection are routine parts of the day-to-day care at this home. Topics of discussion include pertinent safeguarding issues, which are usually discussed in a one-to-one meeting.

The children can display challenging and destructive behaviours. The staff de-escalate such behaviours to good effect. There are times when the staff need to physically intervene to keep children safe. These interventions are appropriate and proportionate. The staff and the children reflect on incidents after they have occurred. This lessens the likelihood of recurrence.

The home has sustained some damage because of children's behaviour. Work to repair this damage has started. However, further work is needed, including clearing rubbish from the rear of the property.

The home is set in a large garden and surrounded by countryside. The home's location risk assessment considers risks in the local area. However, the mitigation of risk is not sufficiently detailed. Local risks posed by a large reservoir less than half a mile away, other waterways, and gangs and radicalisation are not considered. Therefore, the assessment of local risks to children is ineffective. The manager made plans to rectify this during the inspection.

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

The manager is enrolled on a relevant level 5 qualification and has the skills and experience to manage the home effectively. He is supported by a skilled and experienced deputy manager.

The management team has a good knowledge of the children. Managers understand children's needs and the progress that they are making.

The manager writes assessments to consider potential placements at the home. When information is missing or indicates that a child would not be compatible with the other children, placements are declined. Consequently, children's needs are considered well in placement matching.

The staff receive training to support them in their roles. They benefit from weekly visits from an assistant psychologist, who discusses the children with the staff. Some children have individual therapy sessions with the assistant psychologist. The manager ensures that all staff receive regular, practice-led supervisions. However, the manager's own supervisions are not as regular as the organisational policy states. Informal discussions between the home's manager and supervisor are not captured or recorded.

The home's first internal review of the quality of care was thorough. The manager has good oversight of records and documents. However, some records contain spelling mistakes, and some are not cross-referenced properly. This can lead to confusion and

errors.

Feedback from external professionals and family members was good. They spoke positively about the quality of care and the staff, and the difference that the care is making. A mental health practitioner said, 'The staff are really good. They attend professionals' meetings and take [the child] to medication reviews. They are quick to respond and take on board advice. Most importantly, they genuinely care about the children.'

## 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   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <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—<br/>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.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the location risk assessment considers risks in the local area relating to waterways, gangs and radicalisation.</p> | 14/06/2019 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 14/06/2019 |

is necessary and proportionate;

is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))

## Recommendations

- Staff should provide a nurturing and supportive environment that is homely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, repair damage to the home.

- The registered person should have a workforce plan. The plan should detail the process and timescales for supervision of practice and keep appropriate records for staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** 1269505

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Benjamin UK Limited

**Registered provider address:** Church Farm House, Station Road, Aldbury, Tring HP23 5RS

**Responsible individual:** Claudette Deysel

**Registered manager:** Lee Sharp

## Inspector

Ricky D'Arcy: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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