

1269505

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides support and care for up to four children who may have experienced neglect, abuse or trauma that has left them vulnerable.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

There were two children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2024

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: 26 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2023	Full	Good
31/01/2023	Full	Good
09/02/2022	Full	Good
09/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, four children have moved out and two children have moved into the home. Two children were present during this inspection and shared their views with inspectors.

The manager and staff build trusting relationships with the children. They speak in a kind and nurturing way about them and to them. They focus on positive incentives, which supports children to develop and make good choices. Staff review children's progress weekly. One child described their care and every single staff member as amazing. The child said that they feel listened to.

Children benefit from the welcoming home. They benefit from nutritious homecooked meals together.

The manager and education staff are proactive at progressing education for children. One child is attending school full time and has clear aspirations for their future study and career. There is a progressive plan in place for a child who moved into the home recently, and they receive full-time education at the home. When there are barriers, these are explored with a focus on care, therapy and education.

Children are encouraged to try activities. These bring enjoyment and help their physical and mental health. One child started horse riding lessons and went on to compete. Another child enjoys volunteering, playing the drums, skating and has recently joined the cadets. The home organised training for staff in fly fishing so that they support one child with this interest. One child, who seldom left the home, has already enjoyed activities out in the community.

Natural family relationships are valued and supported. This was named as a strength by professionals. One child went from having no family contact to enjoying regular visits to their grandparent and spending time with wider family.

Moves are planned and children are involved with these. The manager reflects well when placements end in order to take any learning forward for the future. Leaving celebrations are held and memory books are given to children. Children have moved with support of their favourite staff member. Positive moves are achieved even in difficult situations, such as when immediate notice was given to a child.

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

Managers and staff understand the children and their needs well. Risk assessments are meaningful and relevant. They name strategies for minimising risks well, for example relating to bullying and self-harm. When necessary, the home has increased staffing to a one-to-one ratio and used waking night staff. This helps children to feel safe.

Children are encouraged and supported to develop good sleep hygiene, attend health appointments and develop healthy eating habits. This includes incentives to research and prepare nutritious and varied home-cooked meals.

Staff have managed challenging dynamics between children, including bullying. They have effective strategies to address this through mediation, key-work sessions and a bullying prevention panel. The panel reflects the seriousness of bullying and involves formally inviting children to attend the head office to share their experience and views before making a plan. This has been a particularly effective process for one child, who understood the seriousness of the panel process. The child is successfully managing relationships in the home.

In the main, staff have managed serious incidents without the need for police intervention or criminalisation of children. Staff have responded to risk quickly and made meaningful attempts to resolve conflict and increase safety between children.

Some children have complex mental health needs and have experienced suicidal ideation. It is clear that staff understand deterioration in children's mental health and what action to take in response to increasing risks. This supports children's safety and minimises potential harm. Regular review, child-focused meetings that include the team and therapeutic workers help to make sure the right support is in place. For one child, this includes therapeutic intervention from both the organisation and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

Restraint is only used when necessary. Children are offered the opportunity to share their experience afterwards, and staff are offered the opportunity to reflect and learn any lessons. Following incidents, children are offered timely therapeutic key-worker sessions to look at ways they can be supported.

At the time of the inspection, four fire doors were not closing effectively. The manager reported these defects immediately to the maintenance team. All four doors were repaired during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023 and is suitably qualified with a breadth of experience in managing children with complex behaviours. The manager is supported by a suitably qualified deputy manager. They work collaboratively to provide a high level of care and good-quality experiences for all the children.

The manager has developed meaningful relationships with the children. The children seek her out to have conversations about what is going on in their lives. They show that they want to spend time with her and know that she will listen to them.

The manager is a strong advocate for children. She is very supportive of the children and is prepared to challenge partner agencies to get the best possible outcomes for them.

Recently, a child wished to make a complaint regarding a conclusion from a professionals' meeting. The manager enlisted the help of an advocate to work with the child to ensure that his wishes and feelings were heard. This meant that the child had a positive outcome.

The manager undertakes regular monitoring that supports her to identify patterns and themes at the home. Internal and external monitoring provide a helpful overview of the home and contribute to changes in staff learning and practice.

Staff have a clear pathway of career progression and complete a wide range of training to support their roles. Agency staff are used sparingly. Instead, staff take on additional shifts to provide children with consistent care routines.

The home's therapist attends regular staff meetings, providing a forum for staff to discuss concerns about children. The staff value the opportunity to explore strategies that help them address new or emerging behaviours. This helps the staff have the time to fully understand their plans and targets. Staff said that the time shared with the therapist helps them to be better practitioners.

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
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))	31 October 2024

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: 1269505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Registered provider address: Coach House, White House Court, Hockliffe Street,
Leighton Buzzard LU7 1FD

Responsible individual: Claudette Rudman

Registered manager: Natalija Balatunovic

Inspector

Trudy Potter, Social Care Inspector
Carrie Twinn, Social Care Inspector

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