

1270301

Registered provider: Future Focused Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number operated by a private provider. It provides care and support for up to three children who may have emotional and social difficulties.

The manager's registration was finalised as part of this inspection process. He has managed the home since February 2020.

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: 5 and 6 October 2021

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: 15 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2019	Full	Good
14/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is a homely environment for children to live in. There have been some recent home improvements, including the installation of a new kitchen and redecoration in the home. Staff have also installed gym equipment in the garage space. This was completed during the restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It helped to keep children fit and active and was well used by children during this period, when their time outside of the home was restricted.

Staff engaged children imaginatively during the restrictions posed by the pandemic. This included purchasing games for the home and garden, and going on long walks, when permitted to do so. As restrictions have lifted, children have been able to engage in their usual interests, such as football and golf. They have also enjoyed trips to theme parks over the summer holidays. Children enjoy these positive activities that they share with staff.

The staff team has been largely stable since the current manager has overseen the home. This allows children to establish positive relationships with those caring for them. Staff speak warmly about the children, and positive relationships were observed during the inspection. One child told inspectors that the best thing about living in the home was that 'staff care about you'. This feeling of security is key to children's progress.

Children make good progress while living here. Their engagement with education is particularly positive, even when attendance has been poor prior to moving here. Staff act as strong advocates for children, ensuring that they attend the most appropriate setting. This enables children to achieve to their full potential. One child achieved well in national examinations and is now attending college, as well as having a part-time job. This is good preparation for his next move to semi-independence, as he is learning the significance of budgeting and saving his well-earned income.

Children contribute their views and suggestions about the home at regular children's meetings. They also told the inspector that they would feel confident in making a complaint. However, the children's guide to the home does not provide information about how to access an advocate independently, should they wish to do so. Children are also asked to sign a document, when they move into the home, to state that they will not need advocacy services while living here. This is unreasonable, as the children's future needs are unknown at this point.

Staff understand children's health needs and they seek professional advice when needed. However, one child's health and placement plan did not make it clear regarding the significance of him receiving his medication at a particular time of day. Furthermore, the time that this medication is administered is not being recorded on

the medication administration chart, making it difficult for the manager to have sufficient oversight to ensure that this is being administered correctly.

Staff support children to keep in contact with their family and friends. Staff appreciate the significance of these relationships. One relative spoken to during the inspection described the staff as 'brilliant.' It is important for children to see these positive relationships between those who are important to them and the staff team.

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

The positive relationships that staff have with children enable them to de-escalate most challenging situations. Children respect staff and listen to their advice. They learn more effective ways to manage their emotions, with the support of staff. Physical interventions are rare. However, when incidents do occur, the records do not currently include an evaluation by the manager, as to the effectiveness of the measure used. This would help inform staff's response to future incidents.

Children do not engage in frequent risk-taking behaviours, such as the misuse of drugs and alcohol. Risk management plans contain pertinent information and strategies for staff to implement to reduce risk. These are also subject to regular review. Children's concerns reduce when they move in, as they soon settle into the routine of the home.

Children are confident that staff will listen to them and take any concerns seriously. Children feel safe here. One child said, 'At this home you feel safe. This is not the case in other homes.'

Children confirm that the rules and boundaries in the home are fair. The ethos of the home is to reward positive behaviour and celebrate children's achievements. Individualised incentive plans are used effectively and help to target specific matters.

Regular key-working conversations ensure that children are provided with accurate information on pertinent issues, such as internet safety and the risks of alcohol. Children's social workers commented that this was a strength of the home. One said, 'Staff are clearly highly skilled at working with young people, responding with humour and inclusivity.'

The home is in a rural location. For security reasons, closed-circuit television (CCTV) has been installed to the exterior of the property since the last inspection. Appropriate consents to this have been obtained. However, the organisation has yet to develop a suitable policy on the use of CCTV, to include the access and storage of recorded footage.

Staff recruitment processes are not always sufficiently. Discrepancies in employment dates have not been fully explored and reference checks are not always clear on employees' files. As staff recruitment is managed centrally, the manager does not

have sufficient oversight of the recruitment processes. This means that the integrity and suitability of those employed are not consistently explored by the manager.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably experienced manager in charge of the home. He has made significant changes since coming here. There is also a deputy manager, who shares the management tasks in the home. Together, they act as good advocates for children and will challenge placing authorities when needed.

Staff feel well supported and valued. They benefit from regular reflective supervision sessions and an annual performance appraisal. These processes are used effectively for staff development. The manager seeks the views of children to help inform staff appraisals, ensuring that children know that their views are important. This increases the effectiveness of this process.

Core training, which includes safeguarding, is completed during induction. Staff also receive specific training to meet the needs of the children living in the home. Furthermore, the majority of the staff team have a suitable childcare qualification. However, several refresher courses are now out of date and some role-specific training, such as supervision and appraisal for senior staff, has yet to be completed. This needs to be prioritised now that the restrictions posed by the pandemic are lifted, to ensure that staff's skills remain current.

The home's statement of purpose outlines the ethos of the home and the outcomes it is intending to achieve. However, the use of bedroom door sensors and the use of CCTV are not clear in this document, as they have been introduced following the registration of the home.

The internal monitoring reports, which are prepared by the manager on a six-monthly basis, demonstrate the progress children are making. However, they lack evaluation, do not include the views of others or target areas for development. Consequently, their effectiveness in driving forward improvements in the home is limited.

The manager wants children to make the most of the opportunities available to them while living here. One child, who has lived in the home for over two years, described the positive difference to the home and the staff team that has occurred since the new manager arrived. He said, 'He has made a big difference all around.'

Social work professionals comment on their effective partnership working and the positive difference that the manager and staff team have made to children living in the home.

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
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about— what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(d)(iii)) Specifically, that the children's guide includes details about how children can access advocacy services directly if they choose and that they are not expected to agree to there being no need to do so at the time of moving into the home.	22 November 2021
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a))	22 November 2021

Specifically, that the document includes details of the bedroom door alarms that are in use and the external CCTV installed at the home.	
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; 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) (3)(d)) Specifically, that staff recruitment processes comply with the principles of safer recruitment.	22 November 2021
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)) Specifically, that prioritisation is given to staff attending refresher training and senior staff completing supervision and appraisal training.	22 November 2021
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)) Specifically, that records include the manager's evaluation.	22 November 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a comprehensive policy regarding the CCTV system installed outside the property. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person should ensure that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Children's health plans should be clear regarding the significance of the timing of the administration of medication and these details should be recorded on the medication administration record. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that quality of care reports are used to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: 1270301

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Future Focused Limited

Registered provider address: Office 1, Crows Nest Business Park, Ashton Road, Billinge, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 7XX

Responsible individual: Neil Smith

Registered manager: Kevin Leader

Inspector

Mandy Williams, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at reports.ofsted.gov.uk/.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231.
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021