

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 run by a private organisation and is registered to care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 18 October 2023.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 June 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 31 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2023	Full	Good
04/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/10/2021	Full	Good
15/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, three children have moved out of the home and two have moved in. Two of the three children living at the home were spoken to by the inspector.

The home is decorated to a good standard. Communal areas such as the lounge and kitchen were clean, tidy and in a good state of repair. The garage is being decorated to create a games area and additional space for children to socialise.

Children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their interests. One child's bedroom had no lightbulb. The child said it had been missing for some time and they had used the light from the en-suite bathroom instead. This was brought to the attention of the manager and quickly rectified.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are taken seriously by staff. Children are registered with essential health services, and staff work closely with the home's therapist to ensure that they respond correctly and empathetically to children's needs.

Children are encouraged to express their individuality, and their wishes and feelings are considered. Staff provide children with opportunities to explore their identity, for example, supporting them to spend time with family and helping them to engage in activities of their choice.

Staff are ambitious for children to reach their academic potential. They support children to understand the benefits of school and encourage them to attend. One child's social worker said that since moving to the home, the child has started to attend school.

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

Children say they feel safe. Behaviour support plans identify each child's needs and their associated risks. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that staff have the correct information on how to care for children. However, missing-from-home protocols do not give staff clear guidance on the action to take when children are missing from the home.

Staff understand safeguarding concerns related to each child, and what they can do to reduce the risk of them being harmed. They use direct-work sessions and seek support from partners such as the police to educate children on the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others. This encourages children to take responsibility for their actions.

Incidents of children going missing from the home are rare. However, when they do occur, there is not always an effective response by leaders, managers and staff to

support children to return home quickly. For example, during one incident, staff did not visit the address of the child's friends when they went missing overnight.

Management of allegations is inconsistent. Since the last inspection, two allegations have been made about staff conduct during an incident when a child has been physically held. Leaders and managers could not demonstrate that one of these allegations had been investigated to ensure that children are being cared for safely.

The registered manager has not ensured that the home's day-to-day care of children consistently protects them from harm. Although there have been no reports of unauthorised entry to the home, on the day of the inspection, the inspector was able to enter the home and communal areas where children were present without staff being aware. This means that children are not routinely being kept safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager was not present during the inspection due to being on annual leave. The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. There were several shortfalls identified at the inspection which indicate that management of the home is ineffective.

Staff say they feel supported by leaders and managers. One member of staff said, 'They are only a phone call away if they are not here.' However, supervision sessions are not taking place regularly in accordance with the home's statement of purpose. This is a missed opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice with the manager and to identify any additional development or support needs.

Team meetings take place regularly and are used as an opportunity to consider the daily operation of the home. Staff benefit from a comprehensive training package that includes needs-led training to help them meet the specific needs of children effectively.

However, leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff have completed training set by the provider. Some staff completed training courses over 12 months ago and others have not completed the same training.

Leaders, managers and staff have good working relationships with partner agencies and professionals who are involved with the children. Staff work closely with social workers, schools and safeguarding agencies. Feedback from professionals was complimentary about staff and their dedication to achieving positive outcomes for children.

Children's experiences of moving into the home are positive. Risk management plans consider the capabilities of staff to care effectively for children and any factors that may affect the quality of care provided to children already living in the home. This contributes to stability in the home for all children.

Changes in the staff team are infrequent. Children benefit from consistency of care from staff who know them well. Leaders and managers have identified the need for a diverse

team of staff made up of a mix of men and women and are taking this into consideration when recruiting new staff.

Management oversight requires improvement. There is a lack of evaluation by managers to determine whether staff need to change their practice in response to incidents. For example, during the inspection, it was brought to the attention of leaders and managers that the missing-from-home protocol for one child was not followed when a missing-from-home incident occurred.

Some children's placing authority plans are not up to date. In addition, leaders and managers have not ensured that staff have access to up-to-date information about children's care, and that the information is stored safely. For example, minutes about a child taken during a meeting had been recorded on a member of staff's personal phone.

Shortfalls identified demonstrate that monitoring and review systems are ineffective. This means the quality of care provided to children is not carefully considered or reviewed to identify areas for improvement.

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 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that the home is secure from unauthorised entry. Leaders and managers must ensure that allegations made by children are taken seriously and investigated appropriately, including making referrals to other agencies when necessary. Leaders and managers must ensure that missing-from-home protocols for children provide staff with clear guidance on what action they should take when a child is missing from the home.	15 August 2024

The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(f)(h)) Leaders and managers must ensure that children's plans and placing authority plans are up to date and on their relevant files. Leaders and managers must ensure that supervision with staff is taking place regularly and in accordance with the home's statement of purpose. Leaders and managers must ensure that incidents are reviewed by the manager to identify shortfalls in practice. Leaders and managers must ensure that minutes from children's meetings are recorded and stored in a manner that keeps children's personal information safe and ensures that it is accessible to all staff. Leaders and managers must ensure that repairs to children's bedrooms are addressed without delay.	15 August 2024
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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: Crows Nest Business Park, Ashton Road, Billinge, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 7XX

Responsible individual: Neil Smith

Registered manager: Daniel Metcalf

Inspector

Chibuzo Otache, Social Care Inspector

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