

1270744

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and support for up to five children with learning disabilities. The children may have a diagnosis of autism, and some may have experienced significant early childhood trauma. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home.

The home is co-located with part of the organisation's school, which one child from the home attends. The other child attends a separate school away from the home, also run by this provider. Only the social care provision was inspected.

The post of registered manager has been vacant since November 2022. A manager has been in post since December 2024 but has not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 22 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 7 August 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection

Since the last inspection in August 2024, staffing ratios have improved due to two children moving out of the home. This has allowed a core staff team to provide stable and consistent care to the two children remaining in the home. Only agency staff known to the children are used, to ensure that children are by staff they are familiar with.

Some refurbishments have been made to the home, including fitting a new kitchen and front door. The living spaces have also been reconfigured to better meet the children's needs. This has had a positive impact on the children and their behaviour. The children's bedrooms have been decorated and personalised to their individual tastes, following them having input into what they would like in their rooms. Ongoing work is planned to make continued improvements to the home.

When a medication error occurred recently, the manager completed a full review of the current system and made significant changes to how medication is administered. This included relocating the medication room to a more appropriate space. This is a recent change and the impact cannot be fully assessed.

Staff know the children well. They understand their needs and how to support them to make progress and develop their skills and independence. Staff have had additional training to ensure that they understand the home's model of care and respond to children in a positive and consistent way.

Children have advocates. They attend children's meetings and key-work sessions to ensure that their views are heard. Communication tools are used to support the children to communicate and understand the world around them.

Staff understand children's risks and behaviours. Clear risk assessments and positive behaviour support plans guide staff practice. These documents are updated regularly.

Overall, staff manage children's behaviour well and use a variety of techniques to de-escalate incidents. This means that physical interventions are only used as a last resort and for short periods. The manager's oversight of incidents and physical interventions is good. She challenges staff to think about what they could have done differently and whether the intervention could have been avoided.

Allegations are always taken seriously. The manager ensures that the local authority designated officer and child's social worker are notified and detailed investigations are completed. However, the manager has not notified Ofsted of allegations. This has not had an impact on the safety of children.

Since the last inspection, there have been further changes in the management team. A new manager has been in post since December 2024. She has had a positive impact on the home in the short time that she has worked there. The manager has not yet applied to register with Ofsted but intends to do this imminently.

The manager has driven progress and improvement in the home and has clear plans for further development. The previous requirements and recommendation have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/12/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2023	Full	Good
01/12/2021	Full	Good

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	28 February 2025
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the manager should apply to Ofsted without delay to be registered.	28 February 2025

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1270744

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 30-34 North Street, Hailsham BN27 1DW

Responsible individual: Scott Fasciolo-Barnes

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector

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