

1275500

Registered provider: Headstart Residential Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to two children, including children who have learning disabilities.

There was one child living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The registered manager post has been vacant since December 2022.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

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: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Good
26/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
19/09/2019	Full	Good
15/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The overall experiences of children living in the home are good. Currently, one child lives at the home. Another child has moved out since the last inspection. The care and support offered to both children have been explored during this inspection. Currently, there are no plans for any new children to move in.

The staff maintain detailed records relating to the children, which include placement and 24-hour behaviour management plans. These documents provide staff with essential information to help them provide individualised care to the children. Summarised versions of these detailed documents are available to agency staff.

Staff focus on preparing children for independence. The staff help the children develop skills in cooking, washing and cleaning. Children are supported to attend school daily, engage in therapy and attend all necessary appointments. The staff celebrate the children's achievements.

Staff regularly talk to the children about what they would like to do and activities they would like to try. When a child declines activities or begins to isolate themselves, staff are alert to this and make continued efforts to re-engage them.

The home is comfortable and decorated to a high standard. The children enjoy a homely atmosphere. Staff continue to encourage and help one child keep their bedroom to a suitable standard. Staff work collaboratively with children, adopting a sensitive and respectful approach.

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

The safeguarding of children is a priority in the home. Staff complete all core training and are aware of their individual responsibilities to safeguard children. Matters relating to safeguarding are regularly reviewed in team meetings and staff supervision.

The staff maintain suitably detailed risk assessments for the children. These are updated regularly by the children's key workers. Staff understand the complex needs of the children. They are motivated to increase their skill set, for example undertaking research and training relating to poor adolescent mental health.

One child has restrictions around the use of their electronic devices. The agreement on their use has not been regularly reviewed to reflect the child's increasing age and understanding. This was highlighted by both the child and their social worker. This child will be turning 18 on their next birthday.

Staff work hard to build positive relationships with the children. Parents and social workers commented that staff, particularly key workers, make continued efforts to build and maintain meaningful relationships with the children.

A bespoke transition plan was recently completed for one child. Staff worked alongside the staff at the child's new home to ensure that a smooth transition occurred. This helped reduce anxiety for both the child and their parent.

Physical interventions are rarely used. Staff are suitably trained and use physical intervention only when a risk of harm occurs. The manager talks to the child afterwards to help them explore their feelings and how restraint can be avoided in the future. On those rare occasions a complaint has been made, this has been investigated and appropriate action taken.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The acting manager applied for registration in July 2023.

The manager understands his duties and responsibilities. Staff receive regular and meaningful supervision. The manager recognises the importance of valuing staff. Consequently, staff feel well supported by him. They describe him as an empathetic and approachable leader. The high-quality care and support afforded to the staff sets an example for staff to follow in their care and support of the children. As a result, children receive a good quality of care.

Staff meetings take place regularly. These are helpful opportunities to both reflect on children's presenting needs and wider issues. There is an emphasis on safeguarding and professional curiosity in these meetings.

Currently, the home is reliant on agency staff to support the permanent staff team. The manager ensures that children continue to receive care from familiar people by ensuring that regular agency staff are used, and that a permanent member of staff is always working at the home.

The manager works well with external agencies, such as the children's placing authorities and school. The manager maintains effective oversight of the home. He is reflective and welcomes suggestions to improve the lived experiences of the children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff take reasonable precautions and make informed professional judgements based on the individual child's needs and developmental stage about when to allow a child to take a particular risk or follow a particular course of action. Staff should discuss the decision with the child's placing authority where appropriate. If a child makes a choice that would place them or another person at significant risk of harm, staff should assist them to understand the risks and manage their risk-taking behaviour to keep themselves and others safe. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.7)

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: 1275500

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Headstart Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 1, Swanwood Park, Gun Hill, Heathfield TN21 0LL

Responsible individual: Caroline Melia

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jane Balfe, Social Care Inspector

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