

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 manager was registered with Ofsted on 21 October 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 2025

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: 1 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

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

Inspection judgements

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

Leaders are unable to demonstrate how previous managers assessed the suitability and safety of one child's move into the home. Despite children's plans highlighting their risks and vulnerabilities, there is no evidence these were considered in the decision-making process. This lack of preparation left staff unprepared to manage children's behaviours and relationships, placing children at risk of harm. As a result, two children were moved out of the home in unplanned ways.

One child was supported positively by staff when moving into the home. Their individual needs were fully assessed, and staff worked together to ensure the home was prepared in a way that made the child feel welcomed. A gradual, well-planned move helped the child adjust at their own pace, reducing worry and anxiety. Staff engaged with the child throughout the process, explaining what to expect and involving them in decisions when possible. This thoughtful approach provided reassurance and stability, helping the child to feel heard from the start.

Staff use proactive de-escalation strategies to help the child manage difficult situations, while building positive relationships and using therapeutic targets to support their emotional development and self-control. As a result, the child is developing new skills, gaining confidence and improving their sense of self-worth, which enhances their future opportunities and overall growth.

Children's health needs are supported, and staff ensure they attend medical appointments. However, one child's weight is not being monitored in line with their statutory health assessment. While this has not yet had a direct impact on their physical well-being, the lack of regular monitoring means there is a risk that changes in their health could go unnoticed.

Staff have built good, trusting relationships with one child, helping them engage in meaningful activities that contribute to their happiness and social development. Through fishing trips, visits to the beach and other outdoor experiences, the child has been able to explore new interests and form positive memories. More recently, staff supported the child to attend a football match, where they had the opportunity to meet players and get their football signed. This experience brought the child immense joy and pride, giving them a sense of achievement and belonging.

Children make progress with their independence. The introduction of a new independence and progress tool has created a structured approach to track their development, aligning their goals with their care plans and professional assessments. This system ensures that staff remain focused on supporting children to achieve realistic milestones, whether in daily living skills, education or emotional regulation. While the outcomes of this new system are not yet fully known, it provides a clear framework for

monitoring progress, enabling staff to provide tailored support that helps children build greater confidence and have increased autonomy in their daily lives.

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

Senior leaders did not thoroughly investigate an allegation made by one child after the child had left the home. Key details, critical for assessing risk and probability, were not properly shared with the local authority designated officer (LADO). This failure has the potential to hinder safe working practices. A re-referral was made on the day of the inspection, and the new head of care intends to conduct a comprehensive investigation, ensuring that lessons learned are shared with the new registered manager to improve future safeguarding practices.

Staff failed to act as the appropriate adult when one child was arrested, which was overlooked in the manager's monitoring of the incident. This lapse has the potential to hinder the child's access to their rights and entitlements, particularly regarding their protection and support when suspected of a criminal offence.

The registered manager's behaviour management tracking programme shows a reduction in incidents, offering essential oversight of patterns and trends. This enables staff to identify key triggers and specific areas that cause the most distress to children. The information gathered is integrated into individual behaviour support plans, providing clear guidance for staff and informing their practice.

There is good evidence of effective collaboration and information-sharing with the allocated social worker and LADO regarding one child. Allegations management and the restrictions outlined in the deprivation of liberty order for this child are regularly reviewed, and relevant plans are updated as needed. These updates help keep staff informed and provide clear guidance. Staff are also trained to ensure they are knowledgeable and capable of following these plans and addressing any concerns appropriately.

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

The children who previously lived in this home, along with staff, experienced a challenging period due to instability among managers and senior leaders. There is little evidence of how staff were supported by leaders during this time of turmoil, with gaps in staff support, supervision, training and team meetings. This lack of consistency impacted on children's sense of security and disrupted the quality of care they received. Despite these challenges, the current registered manager has remained committed to providing stability. By addressing past issues and implementing necessary improvements, the registered manager has created a more structured and supportive environment where children feel safe and valued and have opportunities for growth.

The previous registered manager did not review the quality of care, including the experiences of two children before they moved on, missing an opportunity to learn from

their time in the home. The new registered manager completed a focused child protection review for the most recent child who moved in, however, this report was not reviewed by the responsible individual. The lack of leadership oversight, especially during a period of instability, limited the opportunity to monitor and improve children's experiences and outcomes.

Senior leaders fail to follow procedures for recording and addressing complaints, including those from neighbours and one child. This hinders the opportunity to learn from concerns, improve practice and demonstrate leaders' abilities to address concerns. During the inspection, action was taken to complete a child-friendly complaint form with the child, and the processes for supporting a child in making a complaint were discussed in a team meeting.

The new head of care has introduced a post-incident reflection debrief for managers. This protected space allows the registered manager to fully review incidents, encouraging a deeper understanding of how staff meet and understand children's needs. The insights gained from these reflections are helping to inform team meetings and staff training, representing a positive step forward in leadership oversight, analytical thinking and professional curiosity.

Team meetings focus on the individual needs and welfare of each child, safeguarding concerns and providing support to staff. There are also discussions around therapy-informed plans, which help to embed daily targets and goals for children, ensuring a more holistic approach to their care. The frequency and quality of these meetings have significantly improved, providing more regular opportunities for staff to reflect on the children's needs, share important information and discuss strategies for ongoing support.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, the registered person must create a system to ensure staff are tracking and monitoring one child's weight.	1 June 2025
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;	1 June 2025

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))	
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— 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 and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must demonstrate how staff are effectively supported and helped to develop practice when struggling to manage children's behaviours and relationships. Also, they must carry out thorough investigations when instructed to by child protection professionals.	1 June 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	1 June 2025

that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure children's risks and vulnerabilities are suitably assessed before they move into the home.	
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39 (1) (3) (5))	1 June 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should undertake a quality of care review every six months that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

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: 30-34 North Street, Hailsham BN27 1DW

Responsible individual: Scott Fasciolo-Barnes

Registered manager: Antony Carroll

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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