

1277584

Registered provider: De Novo Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children who have experienced social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 2021. At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. Since the last inspection, one child has returned to live with their family and one child has very recently moved into the home.

In accordance with the home's ethos, staff are referred to as adults in the report.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 November 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2024	Full	Good
26/05/2022	Full	Good
06/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are content, settled and making progress. There is an overwhelming feeling of calmness, with the positive sounds of laughter and chattiness. The children move naturally between the large homely spaces, using all areas and interacting with each other and the adults in a relaxed and confident manner.

Children's photos are displayed around the home, including children who have moved on, with their agreement. Adults celebrate and talk positively about their experiences with children. They are sentimental and aspire that children who move on know they will not be forgotten. The adults demonstrate care that is therapeutic and trauma-informed, which aligns with the home's ethos and culture. They listen, respect and value the children's experiences and form positive, nurturing and supportive relationships.

Children are encouraged and given practical support to pursue their individual interests and hobbies. The adults enjoy taking the children to their activities and share their pride in their achievements with them directly. One child, who recently moved into the home, has been enrolled in swimming and guitar lessons. The relative of the child shared with the inspector that they had asked for these activities to be supported. They felt they engaged in the care of the child even though they no longer live with them.

Adults have high ambition for the children and understand the importance of education. They engage and contribute to the multi-disciplinary meetings to address any educational issues. Adults are advocates for the children and will challenge to ensure that the children all have a suitable education provision. Consequently, one child attends school full time, another is on a modified timetable with a solid plan aimed at full reintegration, and the child who has just moved in has a school provision identified and transition planning is underway.

Adults ensure that the children enjoy their childhood milestones and celebrate these in a fun way. For one child, they organised a pamper day to mark the end of their schooling, ensuring the child had a wonderful experience at their prom. They arranged a special dress and a fancy car for transportation and took photos to capture the moment. Birthdays are celebrated with a balloon circle, cake and gifts, and the child has the choice of whether they want to have a party and a theme. Christmas is celebrated in line with the children's beliefs, and the adults love decorating the house and Christmas planning.

Children's individual needs, including communication needs, are assessed and recorded in plans that are implemented effectively. Children have visual routine and achievement charts, and emotion pictures are added to relevant documents. In the lounge, there is a selection of folders that describe activity and day trip options. The

children are supported to make choices, communicate their wishes, participate in their daily life decisions and progress with age-appropriate independence skills.

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

Children do not go missing from home. Children's free time is supported in line with their age, development and independence needs. The risk is assessed, and the plans inform adults on their actions if a child were to go missing. This is in line with policy and protocols. There have been no complaints made by children about the care and support they receive, and no situations where adults have physically restrained a child. Children receive care that is nurturing and attuned to their needs, as set out in the statement of purpose.

There have been no safeguarding incidents concerning the children. The adults, manager, and leaders all understand their duty and responsibilities to safeguarding children. The safeguarding training ensures policy and procedures are understood and equips everyone with the skills and knowledge to ensure the safety and protection of the children.

The manager and leaders ensure that a safe recruitment process is adhered to. They take decisive and timely action, in consultation with human resources, to always ensure the safety of children.

Children's bedrooms are safe, cosy, well-decorated and personalised spaces. Adults take time to encourage the children to contribute to how they would like their space. Consequently, the bedrooms reflect the children's individuality and interests. One bedroom has a pool filled with toy bricks, another has fabric art adorning the walls and ceilings, and another has an array of cuddly toys and twinkly lights.

The children understand the boundaries about bedrooms being personal spaces and feel secure in them. Despite this, and without adequate evidence of risk, an alarm system operates overnight to alert the adults if the children leave their bedrooms. This restrictive practice is not adequately documented in plans. The children do not know why the alarms are needed or when they are in operation, and this is risk-averse practice. Two children were asked about the alarms and communicated that they hate them and they disturb their sleep.

Children are supported to maintain positive relationships with their family. This includes time with relatives inside and outside of the home. The adults engage with the family, friends and significant people to plan and address any issues of risk, so that the time is a positive experience for all those involved.

Since the last inspection, a child has successfully moved back home to live with their parent. Their parent spoke with the inspector and shared their positive view of the care given to their child and the support to help them live together as a family. They described an amazing relationship, with positive contact and communication that was fantastic.

Adults make sure the children's global health needs are assessed, monitored and met and access specialist services as needed. They spend time to help the children to understand the reason for appointments and explain treatment plans. To avoid delay in services, they will respond to the therapeutic needs of children through commissioned services. One child shared their enjoyment of the equine therapy arranged by the home and described their emotional bond with the horses and how it has been beneficial for them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and leaders know the strengths of the home and areas for development and are responsive to these. They have pride in the home environment and invest to create a positive secure home for the children. They have high aspirations for children to achieve their full potential because of the care and advocacy they provide. Appropriate attention is given to the needs of children who move into the home. Leaders and managers evidence integrity in these decisions, and consideration is given to the impact on all children.

The training offered during induction or as part of continuous development equips the adults with the knowledge and skills to best understand and meet the needs of children. Adults shared their greater understanding of how they would best engage and care for the children following the training on the 'house model of parenting'. The care delivered is observed to be nurturing, relationship-based, therapeutic and in response to trauma, in alignment with the house ethos and values as set out in the statement of purpose.

The manager and leaders value and respond to the complex needs of children in their care and ensure that staff have the appropriate training and skills. They commission a practitioner who is experienced, both professionally and from lived experience with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, pathological demand avoidance and anxiety, to take on a dual role in providing direct weekly sessions with children and providing advice to the adult team. They attend team meetings, deliver specialist training, run well-being sessions and offer coaching and clinical supervision. The adults understand neurodiversity and know how to respond and adjust their care to benefit the child and promote positive outcomes.

The manager excels at developing team engagement through a collaborative and restorative approach to leadership. There is a stable and permanent workforce, and the adults unanimously stated they feel supported, well trained and valued, and they describe a positive culture with an open learning environment. Adults report mistakes and reflect on them in team meetings without fear of blame. They have regular reflective supervision, although, on occasion, the focus on key performance indicators can make this less identifiable.

The manager and leaders have developed an aspiring team leader programme that is accessible to all. This programme is thorough, offering both practical experiences and

academic challenges and allowing participants to navigate the skills and demands of the role while pinpointing their learning needs. The commitment to growth and opportunity within the organisation supports the continuity in the workforce. This ensures consistent support and care and maintains positive relationships, all contributing to better outcomes for the children.

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 may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the use of an alarm on a child's bedroom door is assessed and the rationale for the restriction is documented. They should ensure that children are consulted and know when systems are in operation and that there is a plan to reduce and remove the restriction, as appropriate.	20 December 2024

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: 1277584

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: De Novo Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Bank Green House, Fox Lane, Holmesfield, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 7WG

Responsible individual: Steed Harris

Registered manager: Kirsty Walker

Inspector

Ashley Arkless, Social Care Inspector

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