

2495967

Registered provider: Harmony Childcare Residential Homes Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company and is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

A manager has been appointed and has been in day-to-day charge since the monitoring inspection on 16 and 17 February 2023. He has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 10 May 2023

Date of last inspection: 13 December 2022

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 16 and 17 February 2023, a monitoring visit was undertaken to investigate information received that raised concerns about safeguarding practice and the leadership and management of the home. The inspector identified serious and widespread concerns. As a result, a notice for the restriction of accommodation was issued. In addition, six requirements and two recommendations were made.

On 16 March 2023, a monitoring visit was undertaken to examine the progress made. As a result of this inspection, four requirements were restated and one additional recommendation was made. The restriction of accommodation remained.

On 13 April 2023, the inspector undertook a further monitoring visit because the provider believed that they were ready to welcome new children. The inspector examined the progress made by managers and staff. Not all of the previous requirements had been met, and concerns remained in respect of management oversight and response to children's health needs. The restriction of accommodation remained.

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector evaluated:

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

Inspectors have 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.

The care of children

Progress has been made in supporting the child with her emotional health. She has developed healthy routines and is engaging in activities that support her self-esteem and emotional health. This includes cooking and baking, fishing and pony trekking. Additionally, action has been taken to explore resources and services that can provide additional emotional support to the child. As a result, the child's emotional well-being has improved since the last inspection.

The child is not currently in full-time education. However, the manager has advocated well for the child and, as a result, a new school provision has been identified. The child is due to attend the school imminently, and an assessment of her longer-term education needs is due to take place to further support educational progress.

The child's relationships with staff have improved. The child told the inspector that she can talk to staff about how she is feeling. When the child shares their personal needs and experiences, staff respond in a sensitive and supportive way. The child's confidence in communicating her feelings to staff has improved.

The child has opportunities to express her wishes and feelings. Staff take the time to help the child to understand how her views have been responded to. However, the manager has not taken action to ensure that the child has access to advocacy support, despite a number of significant changes happening in her life.

The child told the inspector that she has enjoyed spending time with her family since the last inspection. However, care planning around family time arrangements is unclear. Not enough action has been taken to review care plans and ensure that they reflect the most up-to-date arrangements. This means that the manager does not fully understand plans in place for the child and which family members should be consulted about her care.

The safety of children

The child feels safe at the home. There has been an overhaul of risk assessments to ensure that clear measures are in place to reduce and manage risks. This is individual to the child. As a result, staff are better equipped to keep the child safe.

The child has clear guidance and boundaries. Consistency from staff continues to improve and this helps the child to understand what is expected of her. A stronger focus on incentives and rewards is encouraging positive behaviour. As a result, there have been no behavioural incidents in the home since the last inspection.

The home uses bedroom door alarms to safeguard children. Children are not consulted regularly about this, as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. Managers and staff do not always review the need for this type of surveillance in the home. Consequently, children may have alarms on their bedroom doors activated when this is not necessary.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The stability of the home continues to improve under the current leadership. The manager has submitted his application to register with Ofsted.

There is a stable team of staff who are committed to achieving positive outcomes for the child. A staff member told the inspector that they are well supported by the manager, and they receive support from their colleagues. There is a greater sense of teamwork to provide consistent care to the child. Supervision sessions and team meetings are used as opportunities for reflection and staff development.

The manager and responsible individual have taken prompt action to address the shortfalls raised at recent inspections. Concerns about children who previously lived in the home have been responded to, and learning has been identified to improve the quality of care for children. Internal and external monitoring is supporting managers to continue to identify ways to improve the service.

Despite a new recording system being introduced at the last inspection, shortfalls remain in the staff's recording of information. Records that relate to significant discussions and meetings with other professionals are not sufficiently detailed. This makes it difficult to understand the actions that the manager has taken or needs to take to progress the child's care plan.

As a result of the progress made at this inspection, the restriction of accommodation has now been lifted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2022	Full	Good
30/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
08/09/2021	Full	Outstanding
02/10/2019	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, 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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that each child— is given appropriate advocacy support. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(b)(iii))	7 June 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that both the arrangements for contact and any contact details (telephone numbers etc.) are included in the placement plan agreed between the registered person and the child's placing authority and updated regularly. In particular, ensure that records reflect the most up-to-date family time arrangements for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 58, paragraph 11.15)
- The registered person should ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene, etc); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. In particular, keep the use of alarms on children's bedroom doors under review and only use them when necessary to protect children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, ensure that there is a clear recording system for contact and meetings with professionals to inform care

planning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2495967

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Childcare Residential Homes Limited

Registered provider address: c/o Easyflow Ltd, 38e Vanguard Way, Battlefield Enterprise Park, Shrewsbury SY1 3TG

Responsible individual: Lyndsay Miller

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Natasha Skinner, Social Care Inspector

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