

2510328

Registered provider: Hand In Hand Childcare

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company operates the home. It provides care for up to three children who have suffered early childhood trauma.

The current manager has been in post since March 2024 and has applied to register with Ofsted. The manager holds a relevant level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 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: 15 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/05/2023	Full	Inadequate
26/04/2022	Full	Good
26/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and one child has moved in. There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Relationships between children and staff are good. Children say that they are happy and like living in the home.

Staff manage moves into and out of the home well. Children have the opportunity to visit the home before moving in and to meet staff and other children living there. This helps children to settle quickly when they move into the home.

Children make good progress in education. All three children are receiving education. This is a significant achievement for one child, who was out of education for an extended period. Two of the children have excellent school attendance. Staff actively encourage children to be ambitious about their futures. One child is taking their end-of-year GCSE exams and wants to pursue an apprenticeship in carpentry. Another child has ambitions to become a fashion designer. Staff and education providers work in partnership to support children to achieve their potential.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met. Children are supported to attend all their routine health appointments. In addition to this, the home's clinician supports children with their individual emotional needs.

Staff ensure that children's views, wishes and feelings contribute to the care that they receive. Children's views are captured by staff through direct work, one-to-one conversations and planned meetings. This ensures that children can participate in the day-to-day decisions that affect their lives. Consequently, they feel listened to and this promotes their engagement with staff.

Children benefit from taking part in a variety of activities, such as go-karting, swimming and going on day trips to theme parks. Additionally, they have enjoyed a five-day holiday. Consequently, children are creating lasting memories, developing their social skills and having fun.

Staff support children to explore their identity. They consult with external agencies and encourage children to join appropriate groups so that children get the support they need. This helps children by providing them with resources, guidance and a supportive environment to explore and understand their identity. One child said, 'Staff make me feel I belong here. No one is treated differently.'

Staff support children to spend time with their families and other people who are important to them. This helps children to stay connected to people who are significant in their lives.

The home is generally well decorated and furnished. However, the chipped and faded paint on children's bedroom doors detracts from the homely feeling.

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

The close and nurturing relationships that children have with staff mean that they can share any worries they may have. Children are confident to speak out if they have concerns. One external professional said, 'This home takes all allegations made by children seriously. They always have children at the heart of their practice.' Investigations into complaints and allegations of harm are managed fairly and effectively, which helps to keep children safe.

The staff ensure that children use the internet safely. For example, parental controls are used to ensure that children access only age-appropriate content online. In addition to this, all three children have completed online internet safety courses to give them the knowledge and skills to navigate the online world safely and responsibly.

Staff address unkind behaviour between children swiftly and effectively. Through meaningful conversations and a non-judgemental environment, staff promote positive relationships and establish consistent boundaries. Consequences are used to reinforce positive behaviour and help children to learn the importance of tolerance and kindness in relationships.

Not all risk assessments and plans for children offer clear guidance for staff to follow. For example, one child's missing-from-home risk assessment did not have accurate details regarding timescales for reporting the child missing to the police. Furthermore, children's medical records lack clear information about prescribed medication. While these recording shortfalls have not had a detrimental impact on children, the lack of clarity does not support staff to minimise risks.

Staff manage children's behaviours well. Physical restraint is used as a last resort, after staff have exhausted all de-escalation techniques. Following all uses of restraint, children are spoken to, giving them the opportunity to discuss what has happened and how they feel. However, staff are not consistently spoken to. This does not promote reflective practice and hinders the identification of areas for staff practice to improve.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was on leave at the time of the inspection. The home's responsible individual and operations manager supported the inspection.

Staff speak positively about working in the home. They say they support each other and are well supported by the leadership team. One member of staff said, 'The new manager, who has been in post only for a few weeks, has brought positive changes. The team atmosphere is more positive.'

The home is fully staffed. The manager ensures that staff are supported to carry out their roles effectively. Staff receive training relevant to the children's needs. They work closely with the home's in-house clinician to understand and implement the home's therapeutic model of care. In addition, the clinician attends fortnightly meetings delivering training and workshops on the model of care, which enhances staff knowledge. As a result, staff have the right skills to care for the children who live in the home.

Staff and leaders have built positive relationships with external professionals. A social worker said, 'Communication with the home's staff is good. The staff are brilliant and always available.'

In the main, staff receive good-quality, reflective supervisions that are regular and develop their practice. However, discussions about the safeguarding policies and processes of the home are not consistently included. This means that the manager cannot be assured that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.

An independent visitor has conducted external monitoring of the home each month. However, the visitor has not consistently spoken to children during their visits. The absence of this feedback prevents children from having the opportunity to share their views about their care with an independent person. Furthermore, on two occasions, Ofsted did not receive reports following the independent person's visits. This limits the regulator's oversight of the home.

Since the last inspection, managers have made improvements to their internal monitoring systems. However, they still fail to consistently identify gaps in records. For instance, details of children's rewards and consequences are not consistently documented. Additionally, children's monthly meeting minutes do not always capture children's views. These shortfalls restrict the manager's oversight of the quality of care provided to 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 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; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that risk assessments are clear and consistent and give staff clear guidance on how to manage children's risks.	10 June 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring all staff involved in a restraint are spoken to within a specified time frame.	10 June 2024

The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring all children's records are up to date, are reflective of their needs and are accurate.	10 June 2024
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and the independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a) (7)(a)) This specifically relates to the independent visitor speaking to all the children during visits and submitting a copy of their independent report to HMCI within the specified time frame.	10 June 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. In particular, ensure children's bedroom doors are repainted when paintwork is faded and chipped. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.9)

- The registered person should ensure that their internal monitoring systems are effective. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that the supervision process for staff reviews children's safety and includes discussions about the safeguarding culture of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

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: 2510328

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hand In Hand Childcare

Registered provider address: 20 Birmingham Road, Walsall WS1 2LT

Responsible individual: Rajvinder Kaur

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jas Nahar, Social Care Inspector

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