

2523027

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for two children. According to the home's statement of purpose, its aim is to create a warm, caring, safe and supportive environment which enables children to recover from past life experiences and grow to achieve their full potential.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 11 July 2022.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2022

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: 28 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
31/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/05/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, the registered manager and responsible individual have worked hard to review and improve how relevant information is obtained, shared and explored before children move into the home. This means staff now have all the necessary information to support children when they arrive at the home for the first time. As a result, children are welcomed by staff who already know and understand a great deal about them. This helps children to feel settled and to be ready to build relationships.

Staff support children to decorate their bedrooms to their tastes and interests. Before children move in, staff ask them what they would like in their bedrooms so they can be personalised. One child's bedroom features geometric shapes, while another child requested a television with a built-in DVD player. This helps children to feel valued, listened to and comfortable in their new surroundings.

One child is making significant progress in their educational engagement and attainment. This is recognised by education professionals and by the child's independent reviewing officer. For another child who recently moved into the home, staff have resourced age-appropriate learning materials and applied this to their daily life skills. The registered manager monitors learning in the home, and actively challenges education professionals about the child's future schooling arrangements.

Staff help children to make steady progress. They understand how best to support children with their targets and do this sensitively. For example, the staff are helping one child to wash their hair independently for the first time, with their support. This is a significant milestone for the child and demonstrates staff commitment in helping children to grow in confidence and self-belief. The child said, 'The staff are really helping me.'

Staff work collaboratively and sensitively with children's families, to help reunite children with their brothers and sisters and other family members. This is done safely and in a planned way, with allocated social workers. This helps children to feel a sense of belonging and encourages them to build steady relationships with people who are important to them.

Staff speak to children about staying healthy, eating well and the importance of exercising regularly. They create weekly menus based on children's favourite foods. However, the menus lack diversity and do not show how staff are offering children the variety of nutrients needed for a well-rounded diet. There is a culture in the home whereby children snack regularly, and this does not always inform daily menu planning. This means children are not always hungry when the evening meal is served, or children are eating similar foods that they ate for lunch. This encourages and reinforces unhealthy eating habits for children.

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

Staff receive structured developmental supervision sessions and take part in team meetings that promote reflection and learning. This means staff are given space, time and support to consider the impact of children's behaviour and to develop strategies to help reduce the risks of incidents happening again.

Staff support children to manage their own emotions using a range of social and behavioural targets. These are adapted to meet the need of each child and are individually incentivised. As a result, staff help children to develop skills and strategies to deal with their own conflicts and difficult feelings.

Staff training is focused on keeping children safe in the context of relevant risks and associated needs. Staff understand and follow safeguarding procedures by completing mandatory safeguarding training as part of the induction process. New staff benefit from individually tailored inductions and development processes that help them to settle into their new role confidently. One new member of staff said, 'I feel confident asking any questions and sharing any concerns with the registered and assistant manager.'

The registered manager provides detailed and clear risk management plans. These provide staff with relevant guidance and support to understand and respond to the difficult emotions children express through their behaviours. However, on one occasion, the registered manager did not obtain further details from a child's placing authority regarding a specific risk that was documented in a child's plan. Although this omission did not obstruct safe working arrangements, it was a missed opportunity for the registered manager to evidence she is managing any associated risks for children effectively.

Staff talk to children about staying safe online. One child has recently completed an online safety course and is clear about the measures in place that help keep them safe. However, not all internet-enabled devices for all children have the appropriate restrictions in place. When children use the internet in each other's company, staff do not have clear and consistent guidance regarding how to supervise and monitor this. This has the potential to expose younger children to inappropriate content on the internet. During the inspection, the registered manager reviewed this and put immediate measures in place to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The newly registered manager is currently undertaking a level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare. She fully understands her responsibilities in completing this qualification within the timeframe required by regulation. The assistant manager is also undertaking this qualification. They both say they feel supported by the responsible individual to develop professionally, and this is regularly discussed in their supervisions.

Managers are visible and hardworking and demonstrate a clear understanding and knowledge of the children they provide care for. They are committed to developing a culture of improved and positive outcomes for children and in providing a good quality of care for them. Staff say managers are approachable and take the time to listen and support staff.

Senior leaders have recently recruited a clinical lead consultant and therapist for children. Staff have introduced the new therapist to the children sensitively and in an informative way. This has been well received, and one child is engaging through art therapy. This contributes positively to children's well-being and helps build relationships with trusted adults.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)) In particular, the registered person should be clear on all relevant information shared in the children's plans and seek further clarity if risks or behaviours are unknown to them.	20 December 2022
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; and ensure that staff provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(vii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff provide varied and nutritious meals for children.	20 December 2022
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—	1 November 2022

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; and

manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that children have access to relevant internet sites in accordance with their age and understanding and provide clear guidance to staff on how to manage what children watch and listen to when together.

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: 2523027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Registered provider address: 5 Theale Lakes Business Park, Moulden Way,
Sulhamstead, Reading, Berkshire RG7 4GB

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Sarah Canning

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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