

2538285

Registered provider: Union House NW Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider.

It is registered to provide care for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties.

Four children are currently being cared for in this home.

The registered manager was registered on 26 November 2019.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 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: 23 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/08/2023	Full	Good
06/09/2022	Full	Good
24/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have strong and positive relationships with staff. Staff remain in the home for a long time and know the children well. One child said, 'I can't wait to wake up because it's brilliant here.' Children feel happy and cared for.

The home is spacious and well maintained, and has been re-decorated since the last inspection. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms in line with their tastes and interests. Children feel comfortable and relaxed in their home.

Children usually remain in the home a long time. One child moved in and out of the home within a relatively short period. However, the decision for the child to move out was made in the child's best interests and was carried out in a planned way.

The manager and staff regularly speak with children about their home and care. Children's views are at the forefront of decision-making in relation to their own plans and the plans for the home; children feel listened to.

Staff ensure that they are aware of important events in the children's lives, such as family birthdays and celebration events such as, proms. Staff ensure that children have additional funds to buy gifts, clothing and other items for their important events. As a result, children feel valued.

The manager and staff have positive relationships with the families of the children they care for. Staff work closely with families to ensure that there is coordinated and consistent support for children. Children and their families are invested in making their time at the home a success.

Not all children have a suitable school or college place. Staff work hard with education professionals to identify provisions that can engage children in learning, including home tutoring, regional training groups and mainstream school. All children have made progress in their education from their individual starting points.

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

Risk management plans identify the key risks and contain clear strategies for staff to follow. They are updated regularly and following any incident. Staff manage incidents well and in line with children's individual plans. Staff teach the children about their own risks and how to manage them. Children are learning to keep themselves safe.

Children generally have positive relationships with one another. The manager and staff take any incidents of bullying seriously, and act quickly to ensure children feel safe. Staff speak to children and facilitate meetings between them to help them repair their

relationships after disagreements. Children are equipped and supported to resolve any issues that arise while living together.

Staff rarely hold children. On the one occasion a staff member did need to hold a child, it was used as a last resort. The measure was reasonable and proportionate. The manager reviewed the measure quickly and spoke to the staff and the child about its use. All staff are trained to hold children safely in the event it is necessary.

Children do not complain about the home. Children know how to complain and are confident that their views would be heard. On the one occasion, an allegation was made by a child, the manager responded promptly and investigated the matter thoroughly. The child was protected and kept informed throughout the process.

Children rarely go missing from the home. Staff know the individual plans for all children and make thorough recordings of any missing episode. Staff make every effort to locate children quickly and reduce the risk to children.

Consequences are rarely used in by staff. Staff offer children restorative ways to make amends, to teach them about the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. The manager reviews the effectiveness of any consequences given to children and gains their views. Children feel that consequences are fair.

Staff search the rooms of children when there is a safeguarding reason to do so. When possible, staff inform children prior to the search and offer them the opportunity to be present. Children understand the reasons staff would search their room, and their dignity and privacy is protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has strong relationships with children. The manager has been in post since the home opened and knows the children well. The manager leads by example through prioritising her relationships with children. Children feel the manager is approachable and available to them.

Staffing is stable. No staff have left since the last inspection, and most have been in the setting for several years. The manager does not use agency staff. Children receive care from adults that know them well.

Staff have a thorough induction when they join the home. They spend time with other staff and children prior to assuming any responsibility. All staff complete the training required by the manager. Staff are well prepared for their role and to meet the needs of the children they care for. Most staff are qualified. However, there has been a significant delay in one staff gaining their diploma. A requirement has been made in relation to this.

The manager has clear oversight of the home and seeks to understand the reasons for trends and patterns, taking action to make or maintain progress. The manager considers lessons learned after incidents and uses these to strengthen practice.

Managers and staff communicate well. Team meetings are regular and purposeful. Staff work well together and are committed to the home and children. Staff also have regular supervision. Staff have regular opportunities to think about their work and how to improve it.

The manager holds timely appraisals with staff. The manager and staff reflect on practice and give clear actions for the next period. However, they do not contain any feedback from children, other staff or external professionals. A recommendation has been made in relation to this.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirement

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— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	2 October 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care, with annual staff appraisals. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 2538285

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Union House NW Limited

Registered provider address: Williams & Co Accountants, 119C Eastbank Street,
Southport PR8 1DQ

Responsible individual: Margaret Hughes

Registered manager: Ciara Beckett

Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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