

2541467

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a registered charity. Staff provide care for up to four children who may be experiencing social and emotional issues. The home operates under a block contract arrangement with the local authority in which it is situated.

At the time of inspection, there were three children living in this home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2024.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 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: 5 April 2022

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
05/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/04/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a homely and welcoming environment. The house is clean, tidy and furnished to a good standard. Children's artwork is displayed alongside books and games around the house. Children have been supported to personalise their rooms. Children feel a sense of belonging.

Children trust the adults caring for them. One child said, 'They [staff] are all great.' Children feel listened to.

Staff understand children's physical health needs. Children are quickly registered with all local health services when they move in. Staff make sure that children attend all necessary appointments. Children are also supported to understand better nutrition and access a healthy and balanced diet. Children are in good health.

Staff promote children's mental health and well-being. Planning of children's care is overseen by a therapeutic care coordinator. She is clearly enthusiastic about ensuring that children receive nurturing, trauma-informed care. Staff also regularly receive useful input from a psychologist to help with their understanding of how trauma will impact children's behaviour. Children receive therapeutic parenting from staff, which improves their emotional well-being.

Children's academic achievements are inconsistent. Some children have reached and exceeded their potential in terms of employment, education and training. However, others do not yet have a clear plan for education. No recommendation or requirement is made in respect of education, as staff are doing everything in their power to challenge colleagues in education and the local authority, escalating these concerns when necessary. Staff also provide children with a range of informal opportunities to learn outside of school.

Staff support children's relationships with family and friends. Staff understand complicated family dynamics and are flexible in their approach to promoting children's time with those important to them. Children experience improved social relationships.

Staff provide children with well-planned support when they move into or out of the home. Staff begin preparations in advance of children coming to or leaving the home. Staff stay in touch with children after they have left the home to ease this transition. Staff also make sure that older children learn the independence skills they will need. Children have positive experiences of moving into or out of the home.

Staff regularly have useful conversations with children about important topics. Staff are curious about children's lives and help them to develop the skills and understanding that they need to make progress. Records in relation to key-work

sessions are a helpful, detailed account of what has been discussed with evidence of useful management oversight.

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

Staff understand how to keep each child safe. Risk assessments provide staff with a useful, easy-to-understand guide as to how to manage risks. Staff follow these plans effectively when risks arise. Staff know what to do in a range of safeguarding scenarios.

Staff share relevant information about children's risks with other professionals. One independent reviewing officer said: 'Staff always speak up at meetings. They always clearly explain what is going on for [the child]. They [staff] make sure the whole team supporting [the child] has all the information needed to make safe decisions about care planning.' Children benefit from a well-coordinated response to risk.

Staff are mindful of the risks children can face online. Staff supervise younger or more vulnerable children's online activity. Staff talk to children about what they are accessing online and are curious about who they are interacting with. Staff also have useful conversations with children about how to keep themselves safe online. Children learn how to enjoy using the internet and technology safely.

Staff have regular useful conversations with children about a range of important topics. Staff use interesting resources in relation to children's risks and vulnerabilities to support children's understanding. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and make more positive choices.

There have been incidents of children self-harming. The manager has put together a thorough safety plan so that staff know how to respond. Staff have also completed training in relation to this risk. Staff know what to do to make sure that children's emotional and physical health is safeguarded.

Staff know how to defuse potentially challenging situations. Each child has a detailed positive behaviour support plan which is personalised to reflect the needs of child. Staff understand how to use positive strategies, such as humour, to maintain a calm home.

Staff do not consistently use rewards and 'life lessons' in a way which is helpful to children. Staff frequently focus on financial consequences rather than education or restorative practice. This punitive approach does not align with the nurturing ethos of the home, set out in the home's statement of purpose.

The manager completes thorough checks when recruiting staff. Children are only cared for by safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably experienced manager overseeing this home. She understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home, knows the children well and understands the skills of her team. Since the last inspection, the manager has used this knowledge to bring about significant improvements in the quality of care that children are receiving.

The manager has made substantial improvement to her oversight. The manager uses various systems of audit effectively to monitor all aspects of the home. The manager has completed an evaluative quality of care review every six months. The manager uses these processes to identify patterns and trends in the provision of care and takes swift action to address any concerns. Effective leadership improves children's experiences of being looked after.

Leaders and managers gather extensive information and documentation from the local authority when children move in. Staff understand children's needs and their experiences to date.

The quality and timeliness of supervision are inconsistent. Staff do not always receive supervision at the frequency detailed in the home's own policy. The quality of some supervision records is poor. This is a missed opportunity for reflection and formal review of staff practice.

Staff complete regular, helpful training across a range of topics. Staff have the skills they need to meet children's needs.

The manager regularly reviews the risks associated with the location of the home. Currently, the services and support available to children through the local authority's 'local offer' are not considered in this assessment. Children may not be accessing important local resources.

Leaders and managers build effective working relationships with all professionals. Children's social workers all say that communication and information-sharing are helpful and that staff advocate well on behalf of children.

Leaders and managers investigate complaints from children thoroughly. All issues raised are investigated effectively. Managers share relevant information with professionals and children receive written feedback. Children feel listened to and understood.

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 must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)) In particular, the registered manager must make sure that all staff are familiar with the home's policy in relation to how positive behaviours will be rewarded and the consequences to be used for unwanted behaviours. In particular, the registered manager must make sure that all staff use the same approach to rewards and consequences and that this fits with the nurturing ethos of the home, as set out in its statement of purpose.	16 April 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that managers and staff are aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. This should take place at the regularity set out in the home's workforce development plan. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 2541467

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Registered provider address: Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Stuart Ainge

Registered manager: Carmel Weedall

Inspector

Nicola Shaw, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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