

2544219

Registered provider: Vcare - 24 Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a private company. The home provides care for three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home. Two children have left the home since the last inspection.

The registered manager post has been vacant since May 2023. Currently the home has an acting manager.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 October 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2022	Full	Good
08/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have built positive relationships with the child currently living in the home. This has helped the child to settle quickly. The child's family talked about the positive progress the child has made and said, 'Staff really care about [name of child].' The child likes living in the home and said, 'It's the best care home I have lived in.'

Staff support the child to have their health needs met and attend specialist appointments. Staff have a good understanding of the child's individual needs. However, one staff member was unclear regarding the child's additional health needs. This could impact on the quality of care provided to the child.

Children are supported with their emotional health, and staff make appropriate referrals to services. Staff help the child understand the importance of keeping healthy and encourage them to make healthy choices.

Staff help the child to develop their independence with the support of incentives. The child carries out household chores and cleans their room.

The child has experienced some changes with their education provisions. Staff try hard to support and encourage the child to attend education. The staff are proactive in advocating for the child to have an appropriate education plan and have assisted the child in creating a CV.

Staff encourage the children to share their wishes and any concerns during individual discussions. The child feels able to share their wishes and their views, and these are embedded in their daily care.

Staff support and encourage the child to access activities such as going ice skating and out on day trips. This offers the child opportunities to build their confidence. Staff assist the child to explore their own identity and talk about their individuality.

Staff work hard with the child to support them to have a positive night-time routine. The child experiences some challenges going to sleep at a reasonable hour, which leaves them without a stable routine. Staff work with the child to assist them in attending essential appointments, but this proves difficult at times.

Staff strive to make children feel welcome in the home. On occasions when moves have been on an emergency basis, staff have assisted children to talk about their worries.

Two children have moved on from the home since the last inspection. Staff supported the children to have an independent advocate to help them share their views. The managers have made attempts to work with the children's placing authority to support children's moves into and out of the home. At times, it has not

been possible to support timely moves due to concerns around children's safety and welfare.

Staff understand the importance of family time and help the child to have good quality time with family. The child and their family enjoyed celebrating the child's birthday together at the home. Staff have also encouraged the child to talk to the independent advocate to ensure that their views are known about seeing other significant people in their life.

The interior decoration of the home needs attention. In the bathroom, some items need replacing, such as the toilet seat and tap, and maintenance is needed to improve the appearance. The sofa in the lounge is damaged, and curtains in the lounge and child's bedroom need securing. These repairs will help the child to feel more relaxed in their home.

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

Staff help to keep the child as safe as possible. The child can identify trusted adults they can talk to and understands how to make a complaint. The child's family said, '[Name of child] feels safe and really trusts staff.'

The staff understand the importance of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff feel confident in reporting any safeguarding concerns. This has resulted in investigations into the staff's practice and appropriate action being taken to safeguard all children in the home.

Staff search for the children when they leave the home without permission, and they are aware of the procedures for notifying and reporting missing-from-home incidents. One child had frequently left the home and disengaged from staff support. This resulted in the managers taking the decision to end the child's placement. The current child's local authority said, 'There has been a significant reduction of missing episodes for the child since living at this home.'

The use of holds has not been necessary for the current child, and staff focus on building good relationships with them. Staff struggled to support one child, and an incident escalated, resulting in police assistance. Gaps in the recordings of this incident mean it is not clear whether staff used appropriate de-escalation techniques.

Staff use rewards to help acknowledge the child's positive behaviours. This helps the child to be proud of their achievements. The child's family said '[Name of child] has made positive progress around understanding their behaviours.' This is helping the child manage their behaviours and feelings safely.

Staff use restorative consequences when the child's behaviours are unacceptable. However, there is an inconsistency in the records of when children have been spoken to following the use of consequences.

Staff work with the child to help them to understand risks around internet and fire safety. This helps the child understand how to keep themselves safe. However, there are gaps in staff support for the child's understanding around healthy relationships.

The child's risk assessments are updated following significant incidents. This helps staff understand the associated risks. However, recordings of some actions are not clear regarding what staff should do to assist the child. This does not offer consistency of care.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home does not have a registered manager in post. The acting manager was absent during the inspection, and the inspection was led by the responsible individual and group manager.

The manager has monitoring systems in place to review the quality of care provided. However, these systems need further embedding to address gaps in recordings of daily logs and significant events. Gaps in management oversight and recordings in the child's risk assessment do not support staff to have the right information to meet children's needs.

Notifications of significant events are not always sent to Ofsted in a timely manner. This results in a delay in securing the independent oversight required to ensure all actions are being undertaken to promote children's welfare.

Staff are not offered consistent supervision, and there are gaps in recordings of supervision. This means staff are not provided a copy of agreed actions, and it is unclear regarding the support offered. There are gaps in the recording of team meetings, which make it difficult to ensure staff can offer the child consistency of care.

The registered manager was proactive in challenging previous local authorities to ensure that children have the right level of support. The registered manager worked with children to access advocate support and ensured one child's voice was heard regarding their wish to move to a family placement.

Staff have completed mandatory training, and new staff are supported through an induction period. The leaders and managers are proactive in addressing shortfalls in staff practice and ensure that staff have appropriate support.

Staff say that they feel supported by leaders and managers. The staff support each other and feel they are a strong stable team. Family and professionals said that communication from managers and staff is 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, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and 'The Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure recordings are clear regarding incidents, consequences, risk assessments and plans and that management oversight provides staff with clear actions to support children. The registered person must also ensure that staff have consistent reflective supervision and team meetings in accordance with the home's statement of purpose.	26 November 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;	26 November 2023

a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))	26 November 2023
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably.	26 November 2023

(Regulation 6 (2)(a)(b)(iv)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure arrangements are in place to support children to have positive care routines, all staff to have a clear understanding of the children's needs and to offer children individual support around associated risks.	
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	26 November 2023

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: 2544219

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Vcare - 24 Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 10, Halifax Way, Pocklington Industrial Estate, Pocklington, York YO42 1NP

Responsible individual: Victoria Simpson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

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