

2547761

Registered provider: Cherish Childrens Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023. He is suitably experienced and working towards the necessary qualification.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with both children.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 September 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2023	Full	Good
24/01/2023	Full	Good
17/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most children have positive relationships with the staff team. They say they feel listened to and can talk openly to staff about their worries. Social workers report that staff do all that they can to promote children's well-being. They support children to work through difficult situations. Some children have benefitted from positive and long-term placements at the home. When children have moved out of the home, they have had planned and supportive transitions to foster care.

During the initial care planning stages for one child, strategies to reduce risks associated with the child's known behaviour have not been identified. In addition, support for the child to help them settle into the home has not been identified. This was important as the child has had negative past experiences of living in residential care.

Most children make progress while living in the home. They gain confidence and develop positive relationships. This is because of clear and consistent boundaries from staff. Children make progress in education. The approach by staff to encourage children to regularly attend education has improved. Staff also help to prepare children for their future and support them to develop their independence skills.

Children's voices are heard. Children's views and feelings are evidenced in their individual care plans, risk assessments and direct work. Staff promote family time and help children to rebuild their relationships with family members, at their own pace and in line with their wishes. Children choose and engage in activities associated with their interests. This provides children with positive experiences.

Children's health needs are well monitored. Staff work with external agencies when children require more support to meet their health needs. Children are provided with individual support from the in-house therapist. This helps children to express themselves and have confidence to talk to adults about their feelings.

The manager has identified areas of the home that require improvement. He has a maintenance plan to prioritise the tasks. Children's bedrooms were found to be very untidy. Plans are not effective in supporting older children to help keep their rooms clean and tidy.

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

Most children feel safe and secure. They know how to complain. When children have raised concerns, leaders and managers have responded to these swiftly and appropriately. Children are supported to talk through any incidents or concerns. Direct work with children helps to educate children about how to keep themselves safe.

Staff are effective in managing safeguarding incidents. Appropriate safeguards are in place to keep children safe. Risk assessments provide staff with up-to-date information about agreed strategies to help minimise risks for children.

Restraint is rarely used in the home. It is used proportionately and always as a last resort. The managers oversight of all incidents has improved. He ensures that incident records and debriefs have been evaluated. He uses reflective practice to review all incidents and provides additional guidance to staff to help them to support children.

Children are not criminalised. Staff take action to try to prevent children from going missing from the home. When children go missing from the home, staff to try to locate them. They work with families, known friends and the police to return children safely to the home. In addition, the senior leadership team regularly communicates with the placing authorities.

Staff understand children's mental health and emotional need. They are alert to indicators of self-harm. Staff respond and support children with a nurturing response. However, on one occasion leaders and managers found that staff's response to children's behaviour could have been better. Managers have been proactive in investigating staff practice to ensure that children are supported consistently.

Consequences are fair and proportionate. However, consequence records are not always overseen by the manager or reviewed for their effectiveness. This does not enable staff to understand if the measure was effective.

Following an isolated incident when a child returned to the home under the influence of alcohol, staff used basic first aid and monitored the child's well-being throughout the evening. However, they did not consult with a medical practitioner to seek medical advice or guidance. This would be good and safe practice, as staff are not trained medical professionals.

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

There have been significant changes to the staff team in recent months. This has left the staff team depleted and it has at times impacted on the continuity of care for children. Leaders and managers recognise this shortfall and they have been actively recruiting staff. Staff from other homes have covered gaps in the rota to ensure that there has been minimal disruption to children's care. The manager now requires time to stabilise his new staff team, to build on their experience and to embed their practice.

The manager has offered continuity of support for the children and staff and has helped on shift to offer extra stability. The manager recognises the home's strengths and areas for development. He is receptive to constructive feedback and learning opportunities. He has a good understanding of the children, their progress and their needs. He advocates on behalf of children and challenges professionals, when required, for the benefit of children.

New and existing staff are not being supervised in line with the providers own policy. On occasions, staff have been provided with brief sessions with the manager. This does not allow time for an effective review of staff performance, reflective practice or to assess the children's needs and the support they require.

However, staff say that they feel well supported by the manager. They say that the senior leadership team are approachable and responsive to staff feedback. Team meetings have not taken place regularly in the last two months, due to the reduced staff levels. The manager plans to hold them more regularly when the staff team has increased. Previous staff meetings have been used effectively to provide staff with additional learning, such as therapeutic parenting reflections and to review the management of specific scenarios.

Leaders and managers identify any practice-related concerns at an early stage and take action to support staff with their skills and practice. The manager monitors training to ensure that all staff have suitable training to meet all the children's needs.

The manager's report on the quality-of-care does not include feedback from children, their families, staff or professional's and it does not detail any action taken or changes made in response to the feedback. The manager does not yet conduct regular audits of systems used in the home. This would help him to identify any gaps in practice or paperwork. Consequently, the manager has failed to notify Ofsted of an incident when a child was missing from the home overnight. This was a requirement at the last inspection and so it has been restated.

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
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— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d)(e))	1 November 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees—receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	1 November 2024
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) In particular, the provider must reduce risks associated with children's known behaviours should identified at initial care planning stages. This includes identifying support for children when they have had negative past experiences of living in residential care.	1 November 2024

The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii))	1 November 2024
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4) (e))	1 November 2024
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(b) (5))	1 November 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. Specifically, the staff team should agree an effective plan with older children to help them to keep their rooms clean and tidy independently. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.7)

- The registered person should ensure that staff have sufficient understanding of relevant health services, including the functions of the designated nurse for looked-after children in their area. They should support children to navigate these services, advocating on their behalf where necessary and appropriate. Specifically, if children return home under the influence of alcohol, staff should consult with a medical practitioner to seek medical advice or guidance. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 34, paragraph 7.8)

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: 2547761

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cherish Childrens Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 8a, Skyways Commercial Campus, Amy Johnson Way, Blackpool FY4 3RS

Responsible individual: Alexandra Wood

Registered manager: Peter Haggan

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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