

2547837

Registered provider: After Care NW Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately operated home, providing care for up to three children who may be experiencing social, emotional and/or mental health needs. There are currently two children living in this home.

The registered manager has been in post since July 2020.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2023

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: 15 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/09/2022	Full	Good
08/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say they feel safe and happy in this home. One child said that she trusts the adults looking after her to always act in her best interests.

Children build positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Children living in this home have experienced trauma and have complex needs. Staff get to know their individual needs and support them in an empathetic way. Children experience kind, consistent and individualised care.

When children move into the home, staff attempt to make sure they have all the necessary information to understand the care that each child needs. Staff have supported one child through some very difficult times and sought additional mental health support for them. However, there have been delays in agreeing the longer-term support.

Although staff have tried to create a homely environment for children, the decor in the home needs updating. This recommendation is restated from the previous inspection.

Staff establish good working relationships with people who are important to children. Staff communicate well with family members and professionals to share relevant information. Children receive a coordinated approach to their care.

Children are prepared for independence. Older children are supported to learn the skills they need to look after themselves in adulthood. Supportive relationships are maintained with children after they move out of the home. Children feel ready for independence.

When children are out of education, some attempts are made to give them other opportunities for learning. One child has been working well with a tutor and is being prepared to reintegrate into mainstream school. However, staff have not yet been successful in engaging one of the children in any learning.

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

Staff understand children's individual vulnerabilities and risks. Staff appropriately notify all agencies of safeguarding concerns and follow safeguarding procedures. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in this team.

Staff receive regular training in relation to current and changing risks for children. This allows them to recognise the indicators of emerging risks. Staff know how to be proactive in their approach to keeping children safe.

Children receive a consistent approach to their care. Staff understand the underlying reasons for children's behaviour and support them in a trauma-informed way. Staff focus on rewarding positive behaviour rather than using negative consequences. This helps children understand the expectations and to feel safe and secure.

Children have gone missing from this home. Staff always follow missing-from-home procedures and are proactive in searching for children. They communicate well with other professionals about children's experiences of going missing. This ensures that children receive a coordinated response.

Incidents of bullying are managed appropriately and staff help children to build better relationships with each other.

Children are rarely physically held in this home. Staff know when and why it would be necessary to physically hold children to keep them safe. Records of physical holds are detailed and children are always supported sensitively afterwards. Children are helped to maintain positive relationships with the adults looking after them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a suitably experienced and qualified manager. The manager gets to know the children living in the home well and strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for them. The manager acts as a good role model for her team.

Leaders and managers use good systems of oversight to monitor and review children's records. As a result, the manager has recognised that children's voices are not being captured effectively. The manager is developing a process to ensure that children can contribute to their records in a meaningful way.

Leaders and managers review all records of significant incidents. This oversight helps to identify emerging patterns and potential gaps in staff training.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision. However, appraisals do not always take place annually. This limits the effectiveness of management oversight of staff performance.

Staff attend a range of training to develop their skills. This includes training specific to the needs of the individual children they are caring for. This helps improve staff knowledge, which in turn contributes to better care for children.

The manager provides a regular quality of care review. Children's views and feedback are captured in this report. This ensures effective analysis and evaluation of the quality of care.

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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— ensure that any care that is arranged or provided for a child that— that the care meets the child's needs. (Regulation 6 (1) (3)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children do not experience delay in the provision of essential services required to meet their needs, such as psychological support.	30 August 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;	30 August 2023

promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)) In particular, when children are out of education, the registered person must ensure that useful strategies are found to help engage children in informal learning. The registered person also must make sure that when children are out of education, steps are taken to quickly find them a place in a suitable academic setting.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	30 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is well maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged by staff to see the home's records as living documents, supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

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: 2547837

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: After Care NW Limited

Registered provider address: 45 Kensington Road, Southport, Lancashire PR9 0RT

Responsible individual: Timothy Blundell

Registered manager: Rosie Binfield

Inspector

Nicola Shaw, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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