

2547967

Registered provider: Empower Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The statement of purpose states that the home can provide care for two children who may have social and emotional needs or learning disabilities. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home.

A manager is in post. They have applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 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: 9 November 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
09/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/07/2022	Full	Inadequate
11/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous inspection, the child's experiences have improved. They are receiving services and support in line with their specific needs, and a consistent care approach is developing that supports the child's needs well.

The child's views are valued. Staff invest time with them to help them express their views, wishes and feelings, which inform care planning. However, when it is not possible to act on their views, the reasons for this are not always recorded. The child has a positive relationship with their independent advocate. The advocate provided feedback to the inspector to indicate that the child's confidence in communicating their wishes to those around them is increasing.

The child participates in full-time educational activities in the home and outdoors that support their learning and development. They have attained certificates for their achievements. Leaders and managers are working to overcome the barriers that exclude the child from attending a school environment, and they are advocating for them to return to school.

Staff ensure that the child is healthy and well. A positive daily routine is in place. Staff facilitate different activities that promote the child's health and well-being. Opportunities for the child to interact with peers are gradually increasing. Important milestones and events are captured in photos and included in memory books that are kept up to date.

Early planning is in place to help the child learn skills needed for independence in line with their development. Clear independence targets and developing systems that track the child's progress effectively will support the child to achieve goals and move on to develop new skills.

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

The child is learning to manage their emotions and behaviour at times of distress. Staff communicate with the child to help them express their feelings effectively. They respond to the child with clear boundaries to help them understand what is expected of them. In the main, the child responds to this approach, and significant incidents have reduced. The child's care arrangements are no longer at risk of breaking down.

Restraint has been used on four occasions by staff. Records are detailed and include discussions held with the child. Management oversight is detailed across records. In addition, the responsible individual reviews incidents to ensure that restraint is proportionate to the risk posed. This increases learning and safe care in the home. A further review that takes into account the child's continuing physical development would be beneficial, to ensure that approaches are suitable.

Safeguarding measures are used to manage risk. Permitted restrictions are in place in line with the child's vulnerability and risk posed. For instance, the front door is locked to keep the child safe and prevent them from running onto a busy road. The review of other restrictions is needed to ensure that measures are implemented only for so long as is necessary and proportionate.

The child's risk assessments are up to date. Actions that staff should take to reduce risk are extensive. Many actions recorded in the assessments are not reflected across records, nor were they reflected in staff's discussions with the inspector, to indicate that all these actions are used. Some language used to respond to the child, and to describe their behaviour, is not helpful for the child.

Leaders and managers are thorough in their responses when concerns about practice arise. No issues have involved direct harm to the child. Learning from these events has been implemented, and compliance with the home's safe care policies has been reinforced across the staff team.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A change in leadership and management has improved the home's effectiveness. The new manager promptly applied to register with Ofsted. They are driving forward consistent and improved care in the home. The new responsible individual has implemented changes that ensure continuing quality of care.

The manager is passionate about their role. They are delivering learning across the staff team, including care that is informed by research. This has contributed to changes in the child's diet and the home environment that are in line with their specific needs. The manager has a good understanding of the child's needs and the care and support that they require to fulfil their potential.

Overall, the home environment provides a homely feel for the child. The home is well maintained. The child is proud of their bedroom, which has been decorated in line with their views and interests. The outdoor area is used by the child regularly. During this inspection, they enjoyed time with staff in the large paddling pool during a period of hot weather. A warm and friendly home atmosphere has developed.

Stability in staffing arrangements is increasing. This contributes to consistent care and helps the child to build positive relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff provided feedback to the inspector that indicates that they enjoy working in the home. Additional training courses planned to develop knowledge and skills across the staff team are yet to progress.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the child is able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet the child's needs. Any decisions to limit the child's access to any area of the home must only be made when this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that information about the child is always recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2547967

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Empower Residential Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2 Prockters Farm Offices, West Monkton, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8QN

Responsible individual: Simon Morton

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care Inspector

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