

2561970

Registered provider: Unity Residential Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately operated home provides care for up to three children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that care is provided for children who have experienced complex or developmental trauma and who display social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2020.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 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: 8 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: good

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. All three children spoke with the inspector to share their views. Children said they are happy and settled living in the home. Two of the children have lived in the home for a long time. One child said, 'This is the best home I have lived in and they keep me safe.' This provides children with stability and security. Children have the opportunity to go on holidays, which broadens their experiences.

One child, who has recently moved into the home, said she was made to feel very welcome even before moving in. The manager has been proactive in finding out the child's likes and dislikes to support this move. One professional said, 'The manager has gone above and beyond to welcome and settle the child into this home.' This helps to reduce children's anxieties around moving somewhere new.

Children who come to live at the home have previously often had disrupted education or no education because of exclusions. However, the manager is proactive and persistent in advocating for children and sourcing bespoke educational packages to meet the individual needs of the children. This has resulted in one child who had limited attendance at school now having over 90% attendance. This supports children's learning and development opportunities.

The manager works hard to maintain children living in the home when there are significant challenges. However, when children have left the home due to safety concerns, they have experienced positive moves and their relationships with staff at the home have been maintained. This helps the children to understand that endings can still be positive.

Transition plans are in place to support children to progress to independent living. However, the manager needs to ensure that work undertaken with children to assist them in developing independent practical skills is clearly recorded and kept updated within their independence plans.

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

Children said they feel safe and protected. They have developed trust in the people who care for them. Children find staff approachable and feel that staff care for them well. This enables children to share any worries or fears they may have.

Children are supported to make complaints and their concerns and complaints are taken seriously and responded to appropriately. However, children do not have the opportunity to respond to the outcome of the complaint and record whether they are satisfied or not with the outcome.

Individual behaviour risk management plans and individual support plans discuss any known risks and vulnerabilities, with clear actions that should be taken to

address and reduce risks. These plans are clear and easy to read. Staff have not had the need to use physical intervention.

Children receive help and support to manage their behaviours safely. Direct-work sessions support children to understand how to keep safe. When necessary, further specialist services are used to work with children to support them in understanding behaviours and consequences of risks.

Staff understand the risks that using the internet may pose for children and have security and safety measures in place to keep children safe online. However, children cannot use the home's Wi-Fi on their mobile phones.

Health and safety procedures in the home are robust, clearly monitored and up to date. This helps children to live in a safe environment. Children's safety is further supported by all staff being trained in safeguarding practices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by a dedicated and organised manager. She is committed to providing positive outcomes for children. She is suitably qualified and experienced. There is good team morale within the home and the home now has a stable staff team. Children receive consistent and reliable care.

All statutory documents for children are on file and plans for children identify their needs and take into account the local authority individual care plan. Professionals and parents are complimentary about the quality of care provided to children.

Staff benefit from a thorough induction programme and are up to date with mandatory training. The manager ensures that staff can access training to meet children's specific needs. Purposeful team meetings and regular supervisions and workshops ensure that staff understand their roles and the needs of the children and how best to support them. This enables staff to put their skills and learning into practice.

Monitoring of the home is in place and in most areas is effective. However, this could be improved by ensuring that all direct-work sessions are dated and signed by staff carrying out the work. Furthermore, when risk assessments have been read, ensure that staff sign these. This will enable the manager to be assured that staff have a good understanding of the plans in place.

The manager ensures that the physical environment of the home feels and looks like a family home. It is warm, welcoming and furnished to a very high standard. Children were proud to show the inspector their home.

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 enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person should make Wi-Fi available for children to access on their mobile phones.	26 April 2023
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(c)) Specifically, ensure that all key-work sessions are dated and have authors and that all risk assessments are signed by staff.	26 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should support children to have the opportunity to respond to the outcome of a complaint they have made to determine whether they are satisfied with the outcome. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child is moving on from the home to live independently, they develop practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care, and that a record of support is kept in the child's independence plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

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: 2561970

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Unity Residential Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Lymevale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6NW

Responsible individual: Sarah Knapper

Registered manager: Emma Shea

Inspector

Nicola Clements, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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