

2569358

Registered provider: HMO NE LTD

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to three children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The inspectors spoke to all three children living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2020.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2022

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: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make continued progress, which helps them to grow in confidence. Children's experiences are enhanced because they receive individualised care and support from a nurturing staff team. Bespoke care plans detail how the children will be supported by the staff. Children have a say about how they wish to be cared for. This benefits children, helping them to thrive in all areas of their lives.

Children's personal spaces are individualised with their favourite pictures, photos and artwork, which are on display. The cleanliness of the home is good, and it is well maintained. The staff undertake regular bedroom checks to ensure that the children's bedrooms are clean and hazard-free. However, a large sofa in a living area is torn and this has not been replaced or fixed.

Children said that they have excellent relationships with staff. One child said, 'I get on with everybody. I can talk to staff about anything. I love it here and this is my home. They care for me.'

Family time is supported well, and in line with the children's agreed plans. Staff recognise the importance of children maintaining key relationships with the people who are important to them. Staff advocate well on behalf of the children. This ensures that the children's family time is a positive experience for them, and their families. This supports children's emotional and identity needs.

Effective working relationships with a range of agencies and professionals help the children to access the care and support that they require. Education is very well supported. Some children who previously did not access education on a full-time basis now attend education in line with their education plans. Children said that they are proud of the progress that they make with their education.

Children make improved progress with their health and well-being. Staff support the children well, so the children can overcome their anxieties about attending health and dental appointments. This helps the children to access the support that they require. Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They are encouraged to enjoy a healthy balanced diet, and to be active through a range of activities that they access. This supports the children's overall well-being and happiness.

Children can speak to an independent advocate when they require independent support. Children feel valued because their views are considered and, when appropriate, acted on. For one child, this has been highly effective as they continue to live in the home, which is the child's wish. Consequently, the child continues to make good progress.

Children's diverse needs are supported and celebrated. Children are educated to embrace each other's differences, including gender identity and cultural

backgrounds. This helps the children to accept each other's differences and live harmoniously.

Children are supported well to move into and out of the home. The manager carefully considers group-living with the mix of children. Detailed risk assessments are completed prior to children moving into the home. This ensures that the right mix of children live together. This benefits children as there is a significant reduction in critical incidents.

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

Children said that they feel safe and well cared for by the staff team. Risks to children are identified, understood and managed effectively. Targeted key-work sessions focus on specific areas where the children require support and protection. Consequently, risks to the children reduce and they become increasingly safe. A professional said:

'Seriously, the team are just amazing. They are so in tune with the children and know them so well. They just get it. I know that [name of the child] is in safe hands. I absolutely think that they effectively safeguard children, but also help [name of child] to understand how to stay safe.'

Handling of medication is not consistently good. During the inspection, the inspectors observed the medication cabinet open and unattended. On this occasion, children did not access the medication. However, this unsafe practice has the potential to expose the children to risk of harm.

Staff are trained to recognise the increased risks to children when they are missing from the home. Detailed risk assessments provide the staff with clear guidance on how to aid the children's safe return home. This guidance is effective, as staff actively search for the children when they are missing from home. There is a significant reduction in children going missing from home as a result of this.

Children are supported well by the staff to manage their emotions and behaviour. Regular discussions with the staff help the children to talk about any worries or concerns that they have. The staff respond to the children with consistent, clear guidance and boundaries. This is effective, as bullying is not a concern, and there is a significant reduction in the need for staff to hold the children.

Effective safeguarding arrangements ensure that the children's safety is promoted and protected. For example, when children make allegations against the staff, the management team takes decisive action to ensure that the children are protected and informed of any decisions and outcomes. Good working relationships between the staff, social workers, police and the local authority designated officer ensure that the provider's safeguarding protocols are followed, which helps to better protect the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is supported by a stable senior staff team. Together, they work collaboratively to help drive forward improvements within the service. The manager shows ambition to develop the service, and continually improves the children's outcomes. Children's day-to-day experiences are positive because of the high standards and delivery of care that the manager expects from her staff team.

The manager has a clear understanding of the progress that the children make. Equally, she understands the need to regularly assess, review and plan for the children to help them to make continued progress. The manager is professional and challenges other professionals when the children do not receive the support that they require. Additionally, she demonstrates the ability to be professionally curious to ensure that the children receive the correct level of care and support. Children thrive because of this.

The manager provides a supportive environment for her staff. Staff receive regular supervision that is reflective. This provides them with the opportunity to support their learning and development. Staff consistently receive a company induction, as well as an induction into the home. Training programmes that the staff access and complete are tailored to the specific needs of the children. Children receive consistent care and support because the staff are skilled and able to respond to their needs.

The manager has missed an opportunity to demonstrate how she assures herself that all the staff are safe and suitable to work with the children. There was one staff file where there was no clear audit on how the necessary recruitment checks had been completed. The manager addressed the issue during the inspection.

The manager understands the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager has effective systems in place to monitor the service, and she undertakes regular audits to review the practice of the staff. She quickly identifies and responds to any potential shortfalls and areas that require improvement.

Staff receive training to help them to understand the children's sexual identity and the impact for children. The manager's passion around the subject has become part of her development plan for the staff and the service. The manager recognises that there is a need to improve the support to children who experience issues around sexual identity. One professional said:

'This home is not advertised as a therapeutic placement. However, having worked with a range of therapeutic provisions and services over many years, this home blows other therapeutic services out of the water.'

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 registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that— medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that all of the staff are clear on how to securely store medication at all times.	9 July 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any damaged furniture in the home is replaced in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should implement an effective system to assure herself that safe recruitment checks on staff are satisfactory. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2569358

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HMO NE Limited

Responsible individual: Neville Rodgers

Registered manager: Karen Hudson

Inspectors

Jacqueline Tate, Social Care Inspector

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector

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