

2571480

Registered provider: PSS Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home opened in January 2020 and provides care for up to five children who have experienced trauma. It is run by a private organisation. The home has been divided into two living spaces and is currently providing two solo placements.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 January 2025

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Ofsted has carried out several monitoring visits to this home due to safeguarding concerns raised by several professionals. In April 2021, a three-month condition was imposed in agreement with the provider due to having no children at the home. Since then, the home has been closed for a long period. At a monitoring visit in July 2024, the provider demonstrated readiness to reopen.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. One child had recently moved to secure accommodation in a planned way. Both children living at the home took part in the inspection.

One child has settled in well and there have been improvements in their general well-being. The manager and staff have advocated for this child to be able to see their family more frequently, and this is happening. Staff facilitate this by arranging visits and transport. This is having a positive impact on the child and will help them to maintain those important relationships with family in the future.

Children build positive relationships with staff, which helps staff to have important conversations with them. Staff meet with children to help them to think about their behaviour and how they can make safe choices. Staff have covered topics such as healthy relationships, child exploitation and managing emotions.

Children have education plans that are individual to them. Children have struggled to engage in education. Staff encourage them to take part. Staff have also been creative in providing other avenues for education, such as trips out and online learning sessions. Children have received certificates for online learning in areas that are relevant to them. Staff work with children's social workers and keep them updated on the educational progress children make. Staff also complete plans each month that review children's educational progress.

Children have been on holiday. They have visited museums, zoos and theme parks. Staff speak to children to find out their interests and plan trips and activities around these. This helps children to take part in activities they enjoy.

The home is well decorated, and children's living spaces are comfortable. Each child's bedroom is individual to them, and staff are supporting children to learn how to keep their rooms tidy. On occasion, staff have locked an internal door at night, restricting children's access to the kitchen. There is no assessment or review in place to demonstrate that this is necessary or proportionate.

One child is exploring their gender identity. Staff are supporting them with this. However, on occasion, in records and conversation, staff have not used the correct gender pronouns.

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

The home has been divided into two separate living spaces to allow children to have their own space and their own staff. At the time of this inspection, this was necessary to keep both children safe. There are high staffing ratios and staff spend a lot of time with children.

Children's social workers said that children are making good progress. One child frequently went missing from their last home. This child still has some missing-from-home episodes but these have significantly reduced. However, recently, this child managed to leave the home without staff knowing. The child returned safely. The manager is investigating how the incident happened.

Staff use incentive plans to help children make progress. They design these with children, looking at what children would like to achieve. This helps children to make positive choices and gain a sense of achievement.

Children are vulnerable to exploitation. Managers and staff have regular meetings with children's social workers and are working with the plans the local authority has put in place. Police regularly visit the home, and they have a good relationship with the staff. Police gave very positive feedback on how the staff work with them.

Staff rarely use physical intervention. Staff said they know children well and can usually help them in times of distress by talking with them. This means that staff do not need to physically intervene.

Children's plans are not clear enough and do not detail the worries and challenges professionals have for them. The assessment tool used on children's plans is confusing. The direction for staff support and intervention is not clear enough. Staff do not always know what is on the plan.

When children move into the home, staff explain to them what to do in the event of a fire. However, children have not taken part in any fire drills.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is working towards attaining his level 5 qualification. He has a deputy manager, who works well alongside him. The manager is committed to the children, who have good relationships with him.

The manager knows the strengths and challenges of the service. There have been some challenges with staffing, but the home is now almost fully staffed. Efforts to recruit new staff are ongoing.

The manager works well alongside the local authority and the police, and he received good feedback from the professionals involved. Parents also gave positive feedback about him.

Staff said that the manager is approachable, and they feel they can take any worries to him. Team meetings are regular and help staff to think about the children they care for.

There is a weekly newsletter for staff that provides them with an update about the home. This also includes relevant training materials that help to inform the staff's work with individual children.

Staff have not always received supervision in line with the home's policy. Two staff members who started last year have only had one formal supervision session. This does not sufficiently support staff to develop in their roles and to consider their emotional well-being and the support they are offering children.

The location risk assessment contains some helpful information, but no professional consultation has been added. This was a requirement at the previous monitoring visit and is 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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(b)) In particular, children's plans must clearly identify any challenges they have and provide staff with clear direction on how they are to support the children. Staff must ensure that they follow these plans.	3 February 2025
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))	3 February 2025
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust;	17 February 2025

an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(x))	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) This requirement was made at the last visit and is restated.	17 February 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children can access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home, and any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home for safety reasons 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 staff provide care which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. In particular, staff should use the correct gender pronouns for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

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: 2571480

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: PSS Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Laser Quay, Culpeper Close, Rochester, Kent ME2 4HU

Responsible individual: Jolene Reynolds

Registered manager: Frederik Booyesen

Inspectors

Mary Costello, Social Care Inspector
Sylvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector

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