

2575463

Registered provider: First 4 Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. It provides care and support for up to two children who have a learning disability. The home is committed to providing care to children on a long-, medium- and short-term basis, depending on the needs of the child.

The home was registered on 7 December 2020. There has been no change in manager since registration. There are currently two children living at the home.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 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 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children experience stability and consistency of care from individuals who know them well and understand their complex health and learning needs. Children are thriving on the well-established routines that give them a sense of predictability in their lives. This helps the children to feel settled and content in their surroundings.

Impact risk assessments are completed on all children who come to live at this home. Children experience a well-planned and individualised introduction to their new home that considers their learning needs. This promotes positive beginnings and gives children a sense of familiarity.

Children are able to develop trusting relationships with the manager and the staff. The manager and the deputy are very much a visual presence, and children have freedom of movement throughout the home, closely supervised by staff. The home radiates warmth and love, and the children get much joy and comfort from looking after and playing with the home's pet dog.

Positive relationships have been established with health, education and social care professionals. This coordinated and well-managed approach in a culture of open communication ensures the children's complex needs are being met.

Care plans are exceptionally child-centred and focused on giving children a voice. Through communication boards and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) symbols, children are given choices in their day-to-day care. Children's identified targets are visual and focused on a 'small-steps approach'. Their lives improve, and over time they develop more independence skills relative to their learning disabilities.

Professional feedback is extremely positive and both children are very settled. Education has been and remains a priority for the manager and staff. One child is really settled in school and looks forward to going every morning. The school reports that this child has made measurable progress, and there is daily communication between the home and school. The manager continues to be a strong advocate when a school place is needed for children who come to live at the home.

Activities inside and outside of the home and days out are well planned and tailored to each child's individual choices. Much emphasis is given to finding out what the children like to do, and this helps to provide them with positive experiences.

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

The risks and vulnerabilities of the children are well documented, and this underpins the day-to-day care of the children. Keeping the children safe is a priority, and staff are very much attuned to changes in the children's mood and behaviour. Staff

respond sensitively and can often re-direct the children through distraction or by using the 'change of face' technique. This has significantly reduced self-injurious behaviour.

There has been a real emphasis on creating a safe and open culture where staff understand their responsibilities in safeguarding and protecting children. The atmosphere in the home and the observed interactions with the children demonstrate that they are safe and feel safe. Children's demeanour and behaviour suggest that they are comfortable with the adults that care for them.

Behaviour management plans and risk assessments capture each child's complex health and learning needs. This informs the methods taken to ensure children are safe both in the home and when out in the community. Through the use of PECS symbols, children are helped to understand what measures staff will take to keep them safe from harm.

Staff are confident in their safeguarding responsibilities. There is clear guidance on whistle-blowing and reporting unsafe practice. This means that children are better protected, and staff can be the voice for the child if such a need arises.

The escalation in one child's behaviour and the increase in serious incidents resulted in the child moving from the home. Some of these incidents were not reported to Ofsted, and this compromised the ability of the regulator to have knowledge and oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a competent and dedicated leader who has a visual presence in the home. He is supported by an equally committed deputy manager who provides that additional layer of guidance and support to the staff. All staff said they felt well supported, had good training opportunities and received regular supervision.

The manager uses a range of monitoring and auditing processes to ensure the smooth running of the home. The manager's oversight and ability to 'think outside the box' enhance the lives and experiences of the children.

Much effort is made to making the home feel warm and welcoming. There are lots of photos of the children engaging in various activities, such as swimming, soft play and day trips. The children's life-story books capture many memories of how happy and settled the children are in their home.

The manager regularly consults with professionals and is a good advocate for the children. This often means that 'things get done', and the children do not lose out. If a child needs glasses and will not go to the optician, the optician will come to the home. These small but significant touches improve the quality of life for children.

The manager is a source of encouragement for staff in their professional development. This has led to opportunities for staff to progress through internal

promotion. The home is very much a learning environment with face-to-face training in areas such as Makaton and epilepsy awareness. There are daily questions on a range of topics that improve staff awareness and confidence.

Potential and new employees go through a rigorous interview and verification process to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Induction and probationary periods provide staff with the support they need to acquire the necessary skills and experience to confidently fulfil their role.

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

Statutory requirement

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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii) (e))	28 February 2023

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: 2575463

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: First 4 Care Limited

Registered provider address: 16 St. Wilfrids Road, Bessacarr, Doncaster DN4 6AA

Responsible individual: Frances Russell

Registered manager: Marley Higton

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

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