

2575788

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. In addition, children may have a learning disability. At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2021.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 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: 28 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/03/2022	Full	Good
09/12/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved on from the home and two children have moved in. Records and photos confirm how a 17-year-old child was supported with the significant move to supported lodgings after living at this home for almost two years. The move went smoothly after sensitive planning, a celebratory meal and lots of reassurance. The child left this home equipped with life skills, a provisional driving licence and part-time employment.

The culture of the home has changed to reflect the care and support of two younger children of primary school age. These children received a warm welcome from the other child, a teenager, and they generally all get on as a residential group. During the inspection, one child made breakfast for another. Other acts of kindness include making cakes to sell to raise money for a children's charity and participating in a shoebox collection to provide Christmas gifts for children in need.

Children are provided with consistent care from staff who know them well. The manager and staff team provide children with a safe and nurturing environment. To avoid unnecessary changes, one child continued to attend their primary school with staff driving a daily 90-minute journey. This continued throughout the summer term until the child could attend the local primary school that is a short walk from the home. Children are supported to attend and achieve in their education even when the level of engagement can be minimal on occasions.

Children are in good physical health and do not need any regular medication. They are helped to attend routine health appointments, and arrangements are made when children require some emotional support. The involvement of a new psychotherapist ensures that children and staff can readily access therapeutic support.

Overall, children like where they live, and wider professionals are complimentary about the care and support being provided to children. The nurture of children is evident as staff strive to develop positive relationships and encourage the children to achieve, according to their individual stages of development. Memories are captured well for the children to have now and in the future. Written records are made alongside photos of activities and significant events, including the summer holiday to Disneyland Paris.

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

Risk management is very good. The registered manager is extremely proactive in her approach to safeguarding. This has gone beyond this home and extended into the local community, thereby reducing the risks for the children in this home and for children in the local area. The manager has engaged in excellent partnership working with the police and other agencies. The commitment to taking the initiative

in the safeguarding of children is a significant development for the manager compared to a year ago, when Ofsted judged this home to be inadequate.

Incidents of missing from home do occur. At times, these incidents have involved antisocial behaviour and came to the attention of the police. Through effective partnership working, the outcome to address such negative behaviour has led to community resolution. This has ensured that the child receives additional support. The local police officer reports that they have developed a very good working relationship that is open and honest.

Younger children sometimes struggle to settle at bedtimes. A calming routine is consistently provided, and rewards are given. Leaders and managers arranged bespoke training to look at the needs of the younger child given that the team's previous experience has been caring for teenagers. In addition, training regarding the use of physical restraint was adapted to consider smaller and younger children.

The use of physical intervention is minimal. More often, a child is guided away from upset or a distraction. Children respond well to incentives and rewards for meeting expectations of behaviour. When things do not go so well, children may have a small consequence for their behaviour but overwhelmingly receive support to find strategies to avoid such behaviour being repeated.

Children are further safeguarded through leaders and managers ensuring that thorough checks and references are carried out for any prospective member of staff. This ensures that they are assessed as suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has achieved a qualification in leadership and management since the last inspection. In addition, she has demonstrated her professional growth by not only addressing the failures from the inspection in December 2021 but continuing in her quest to provide good-quality care for children.

Children are cared for by a stable staff team. Staff say that they feel supported and valued with regular supervision and training. Leaders and managers recognise the importance of the well-being of staff. Employees are invited to complete a questionnaire about their mental health so that the senior leadership team knows how, and when, to offer support. One member of staff said:

'I have never had an employer ask me about my mental health, I thought "wow". Most staff say thank you to each other at the end of the shift, it makes you feel valued and part of the team.'

Leaders and managers use effective systems to monitor and review the care records and staff practice. The organisation has built in layers of quality assurance among senior staff to ensure compliance and that all incidents are managed and reported appropriately. Leaders and managers promote a culture where incidents are analysed and opportunities are taken for reflection and learning.

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: 2575788

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Fairfield Lodge, Evenwood Gate, Evenwood, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 9NH

Responsible individual: Ruth Parker

Registered manager: Emily Reed

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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