

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 have needs associated with a learning disability and/or social and emotional difficulties. In addition, children may have experienced loss, trauma and abuse. The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2021.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 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: 9 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/12/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous full inspection on 9 December 2021, two of the three children have remained living at this home. Leaders and managers recognised that they could not meet the complex needs of one child after repeated incidents of disruptive behaviour. The local authority found an alternative home for this child to move to in January 2022. The manager, staff and children ensured that this child left with gifts and photographs of their time living at this home, after a farewell dinner and outing.

The quality of care for children has improved to a good standard. A consistent staff team support children to feel secure and settled in this home. Since the previous inspection, no staff have left and the use of temporary staff has significantly reduced. Staff know the children well. They listen to each child and invest their time to build trusting and positive relationships. The stability in the staffing contributes to the children making good progress and feeling settled in this home.

Staff encourage children to pursue their interests. Activities and outings centre around the love of animals and a keen interest in sport. Children are engaged in volunteering through football coaching and animal welfare. Creative journals and photograph albums capture these positive experiences and memories.

Children are supported well with their education. There is practical and emotional support with mock exams, and alternative educational activities for those who are not attending full time education. Children who secure part-time employment receive support and guidance to make sure the hours of work do not negatively impact on their study and social time. However, leaders and manager have not checked that the arrangements are in accordance with the local council rules for child employment.

Children like their large bedrooms and that they are en suite. Children live in a comfortable home that has recently been decorated. Any damage to the home is repaired promptly and the list of maintenance tasks was minimal at the time of this inspection. Staff have completed training in food safety, however, cooked meat was observed on the same shelf as raw meat in the fridge. This storage is not in accordance with food safety standards.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders and the manager have spent time reflecting on when they have been challenged by the behaviours of the children. This has led to changes in practice with a determined approach towards effective responses to disrupt patterns of negative behaviour. As a result, children feel safer, as reflected in the reduction in incidents and restraint has not been used.

Children are supported well by adults who care for them and want to keep them safe. The manager and staff team are creative in their communication with children, recognising the medium that different children prefer. The use of social media is monitored appropriately to safeguard children and at times this can alert staff in order that they can respond to protect children.

All staff have completed safeguarding training since the last inspection. Staff skills and knowledge in the protection of children are further enhanced through regular discussions at team meetings. Scenarios of children at risk are discussed as a team, resulting in strategies identified for consistency of approach. Such strategies are included in the children's care plans and risk assessments.

Risk management is generally good with regular reviews and updates to documents. However, a potential risk has been identified for one child where the risk assessment is too vague when referring to 'inappropriate videos'. Without explicit details of the proposed risk, staff are not prompted to be curious enough in this area of concern.

At times, children have left the home and gone missing. Staff have followed and searched known areas for the safe return of the children. These incidents have lessened in recent weeks as children are supported to meet friends outside of the home, to negate the pull to go missing. The manager is proactive in meeting with the local police to work together to ensure that children do not become engaged in anti-social behaviour.

Since the last inspection, senior leaders have obtained satisfactory employment details of agency staff. The safer recruitment checks have been carried out to ensure that the agency staff are suitable to care for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have made good progress to address the requirements from the previous inspection. A meaningful action plan has been implemented to address the failings and support the development of the home.

Changes have been made to the environment, an extension to the time that staff finish working in the evening, the arrangement for newer staff to work alongside experienced staff, and the improvement to the analysis and reflection on incidents. High levels of staff turnover were a feature of the previous inspection and now the team is stable and gaining in confidence.

Staff report that they are well supported by the manager and the deputy. They feel stronger as a team having worked hard together to address the failings from the previous inspection. Numerous training events have been provided through online learning and in person with a trainer. The manager has led the team well to make the necessary changes. Records of team meetings and supervision evidence the drive to develop individually, and collectively, with the focus firmly remaining on providing the best for children.

Social workers report positively about this home. They are satisfied with the level of care provided and comment on very good levels of communication. One social worker said of the staff, that the children are their absolute priority and that they both advocate for children and work to support their care plan. Both social workers report that they feel their child is safe living at this home.

Leaders and managers have demonstrated that they can make significant changes to address failings and poor practice. As an organisation, leaders and managers are reflective to consider any lessons learned to inform future practice.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home complies with relevant health and safety legislations. In particular, ensure that food hygiene standards are adhered to by separating raw and cooked meat in the fridge. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children's home staff seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings. In particular, when children secure part-time employment, the registered person should ensure that the arrangements are in accordance with the local council rules for child employment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. In particular, ensure that all known potential safeguarding risks are included in risk management assessments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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, Bishop Auckland
DL14 9NH

Responsible individual: Ruth Parker

Registered manager: Emily Reed

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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