

2590832

Registered provider: Thrive Childcare Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider operates this home. The home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties due to past trauma. Three children live in the home, and all were spoken with during the inspection.

A suitably experienced manager leads the home. She registered with Ofsted in August 2024 and is working towards completing a level 5 qualification in children's residential care.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 December 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/01/2024	Full	Good
13/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children are making progress from their starting points. Children like the staff, and their social workers speak positively about the children's experiences of living in the home. However, shortfalls in some aspects of the children's care weaken the good care that is provided and impact on children's overall experiences.

One child has lived at the home for three years, and this was celebrated with a big party. Children are warmly welcomed to the home, and they are supported to have positive endings when they move on. Before new children move in, information to support decision-making is gathered. However, the behaviours of a child already living in the home were not fully considered on one occasion. This shortfall in care planning was a missed opportunity to ensure that children are always well matched.

Staff ensure that children attend routine health appointments, and staff respond well to children's emerging health needs. One child does not have good sleep hygiene routines, and different techniques to aid sleep are being explored. Children's medicines are managed safely, which promotes good health.

Children benefit from living in a welcoming home, which has been nicely decorated for Christmas. Children speak positively about the improvements made, including the redecoration of communal areas. Children personalise their bedrooms, which promotes a sense of belonging. Children and staff sit together to eat some meals at the dining table. Children benefit from the social element of mealtimes.

Staff promote the importance of children's education, but the educational progress of children is mixed. Two children attend school and are making good progress. The third child rarely attends school in line with their plan.

Children's cultural needs are well considered and supported. One child has recently visited a place of worship, helping them to explore their identity. Children have opportunities to learn about different cultures, which is supporting them to gain an understanding of people's differences. This provides opportunities for children to be inquisitive and ask questions. This is a positive area of practice.

Staff support children's hobbies and interests. These include attending the Scouts and the Army Cadets. One child is progressing well with swimming and is now walking to school on their own. These achievements are recognised and celebrated and give the children confidence in their abilities.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Aspects of risk management need to be strengthened. Most risks that the children face are assessed, and safety plans contain strategies to help staff provide good care. However, this practice is inconsistent. While staff know the children well and feel confident to manage risks, including children's behaviours towards each other, these risks are not sufficiently assessed. Without clear guidance, the manager is unable to demonstrate that children are always well supported in their most vulnerable times.

There have been nine incidents of bullying between children since the last inspection. The manager feels children generally get along well together, and important discussions are held with children about their unacceptable behaviours. However, more needs to be done to promote positive relationships. This is of great importance, as one child told inspectors that they sometimes feel scared of the other children. The manager took prompt action in response to this feedback and is exploring the child's feelings with them to make them feel more secure.

Staff's knowledge of the risks that the internet poses for children has not always been sufficient. This is a weakness in safeguarding practice, and one child had access to a social media platform that was not age appropriate. While this risk has been mitigated, it compromised the child's safety and left them vulnerable to harm.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When this happens, staff try to locate them and ensure that relevant professionals, such as the police, are kept up to date. When children return home, they are warmly welcomed back. The manager has oversight of the incidents.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort. On two occasions, children have been held by staff to keep them safe. Incidents are scrutinised by the manager to ensure that the use of intervention is proportionate and necessary. Children share their views on being held, and this helps staff to understand children's experiences to inform their future practice.

Complaints are professionally managed. When a child made a complaint about a staff member, it was taken seriously, and it was responded to well. The complaint was investigated, and the responsible individual wrote a letter to the child to share the outcome. This shows children are listened to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There has been a change of manager at the home. The children like the new manager, and she is dedicated to them. They are at the heart of her practice, and she wants the best for them. The manager is reflective and is developing in her role. She has a clear vision for the home. Her development is well supported by the responsible individual, who visits the home frequently.

A range of monitoring systems support the manager's oversight of the children's care and the day-to-day running of the home. However, systems have failed to identify some shortfalls, for example the lack of guidance to help staff manage children's behaviours towards each other. Therefore, opportunities to develop the service and improve safety have been missed.

The manager is realistic about some areas that need to be developed further, particularly given the recent staff changes and the newly formed team. Staff changes have been well managed, and children have had opportunities to say goodbye to the staff that they are fond of. There are enough staff to meet children's needs, and there are no staff vacancies.

Staff feel supported and valued. They say the manager is a strength of the home and her leadership style promotes a strong ethos of teamworking. The manager encourages staff to play an active role by taking on extra responsibilities. This gives them shared ownership, builds their confidence and supports their development.

The manager ensures that staff receive good-quality supervision sessions. Staff say this support provides opportunities for reflection and encourages them to continually learn to benefit the children.

Staff are competent to carry out their roles. Staff receive an effective induction and complete a varied training programme, which includes training to help them to meet the children's specific needs. Staff attend monthly team meetings, and they also receive ongoing support from a linked specialist practitioner.

The manager works hard to maintain relationships with external professionals to ensure that children's needs are met. Three social workers spoke positively about communication with the home, which supports positive outcomes for children.

Leaders do not ensure that Ofsted is notified of all significant events that happen in the home, for example an incident involving a child that required police involvement. This compromises external oversight of safeguarding practices in the home. In addition, the home's statement of purpose did not accurately reflect the roles of all staff working in the home. The manager took immediate action to address this.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they have effective oversight of all aspects of the home to improve the quality of care provided to children.	31 January 2025
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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;	31 January 2025

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)(iii)(iv)(b)) In particular the registered person must ensure that care planning is robust and fully considers how the behaviours of children living in home may impact on any new children that move into the home. The registered person must make sure that children only access information that is age appropriate. The registered person must make sure that all risks that children face are assessed and strategies are documented to help staff provide safe care consistently. This specifically relates to children's behaviours towards each other. In addition, the registered person must manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other so that the day-to-day care keeps each child safe.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	31 January 2025

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: 2590832

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Thrive Childcare Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 225 5300 Lakeside, Cheadle SK8 3PG

Responsible individual: Amy Moulton

Registered manager: Hayley Jones

Inspectors

Amy Richards, Social Care Inspector
Becky Rutter, Social Care Inspector

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