

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. It provides care for up to three children with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties due to past trauma.

The home is led by a qualified manager who was registered with Ofsted in June 2022.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 24 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home. The matching of one child who has now left the home was not well considered. The manager did not ensure that they received the relevant information from the social worker in a timely manner. The staff were not equipped to manage this child's behaviour and this had an adverse impact on the other children. Incidents have reduced now the child has left the home and the children who have remained are more settled. Staff are now better equipped to meet their needs.

Staff do not consistently ensure that key-work sessions are carried out with all children to help them understand and reduce their risks. Staff do not consider creative ways to support children who struggle to engage. Some key-work sessions are not recorded. As a result, staff are not able to evidence how they have supported children effectively.

Staff do not ensure that boundaries in the home are consistent. For example, there are no clear strategies to support children who smoke cigarettes. The home's policy does not assist staff to support children effectively as it states that smoking is permitted in the home. Some staff have not challenged children when they have bought e-cigarettes. This practice does not promote children's health or positive behaviour.

Children's experiences of education are mixed. One child's education is promoted, and they are making good progress. However, staff and the manager have not taken sufficient action to ensure that one child is adequately supported, and they have not escalated concerns with the relevant agencies. Consequently, the child has not achieved positive outcomes in their education.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are valued. Staff and the manager ensure that there is good consultation with children to improve the quality of care provided by the home. This practice helps children feel listened to.

Children are accessing specialist help when appropriate to do so. For example, staff have made referrals to substance misuse services for children and more support has been sought when further concerns have arisen. Children at risk of criminal exploitation are now accessing support from relevant services. As a result, children's welfare is improving.

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

Overall, staff and the manager respond well when children go missing from the home. They ensure that children are reported as missing to the police, and children

experience a well-coordinated response from agencies to help manage the risks. However, the staff and the manager do not ensure that independent return interviews are carried out with children. This hinders effective safeguarding of children.

Staff do not consistently demonstrate professional curiosity to address risks associated with the exploitation of children and risks to children who misuse substances. For example, they take sufficient action to share information with partner agencies about potentially risky adults. However, they do not consistently recognise indicators that children are at increased risk of being exploited and groomed. This impacts on the effectiveness of children's safety plans.

The quality of recording is variable. For example, incident records are not always clear, and some are missing important information. Staff do not consistently demonstrate that they have a good awareness of children's lived experiences and the impact that these may have on their behaviour. This impacts on the care that children receive in the home.

Staff do not consistently follow children's risk assessments. They ensure that regular room checks are carried out when they suspect that children are misusing substances. However, they do not consistently record that they have made welfare checks on children when they spend time in the community. In addition, staff were not able to identify risks in relation to one child's internet use in a timely manner, as they were not carrying out mobile phone checks in line with their risk assessment. As a result, risks to children are not consistently managed.

Overall, the manager ensures that staff are safely recruited. However, on one occasion, the manager failed to challenge a previous employer when they declined to provide a reference for a staff member, despite the employer having previous concerns about that person's practice. Consequently, the manager is not assured that all adults are appropriately risk assessed to ensure that they are suitable to work in the home.

Children say that they feel safe in the home and that they have developed trusted relationships with staff. Children can identify adults who they can speak to if they have any worries. This ensures that children are supported effectively.

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

The manager's internal and external monitoring systems are not consistently effective. The auditing systems do not always identify the shortfalls in staff's practice and the quality of care provided to children. Consequently, the systems in place are not effective.

Staff do not ensure that all relevant health and safety checks are completed. For example, water temperature checks and fridge temperature checks are not

consistently recorded by staff in line with relevant policies. This does not ensure the home environment is monitored effectively.

Staff do not always demonstrate the skills, knowledge and experience to respond to children's behaviour. For example, some staff do not consistently follow children's support plans when de-escalating behaviour. This impacts on the experiences of the children in the home.

The manager ensures that staff are supported through regular team meetings and supervisions. The manager also provides additional support when staff are experiencing challenges in their practice. She has also implemented a workforce development plan to support staff to develop their knowledge and skills. This ensures that children are now cared for by staff who feel well supported.

The manager is working very hard to provide consistency for the home and staff. She is reflective of the weaknesses and strengths of the home. She has a vision for the home and has plans in place to improve the quality of care provided to children. Consequently, some improvements are now evident in the staff's practice and the experiences of children.

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, 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi)(viii)(ix)(x)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children access an education provision. In addition, they must escalate concerns with other professionals if there are any barriers to children accessing an education provision, or if regular meetings are not taking place to discuss the child's personal education plan.	18 November 2022

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children who go missing are given an opportunity to have an independent return interview and must ensure that this is escalated with the local authority if not completed. In addition, the registered person must ensure that staff demonstrate professional curiosity to identify risks associated with child criminal exploitation and when children misuse substances and take appropriate action’. The registered person must also ensure that staff follow children’s risk assessments and must ensure that regular key-work sessions are carried out with children. The registered person must ensure that they review the home’s policy and procedure in relation to children smoking on the premises and that staff implement this.	18 November 2022
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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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are suitably experienced and skilled to meet the needs of the children in their care. In addition, the registered person must ensure that there are effective monitoring and reviewing systems to help identify shortfalls in staff's practice and continue to make improvements in the quality of care provided to children.	18 November 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	18 November 2022

In particular, the registered person must ensure that the matching of children being admitted into the home is well considered. The manager must ensure that the needs of all the children are considered before the admission, including the impact they may have on each other.	
The registered person must— ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (2)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's records are kept up to date.	18 November 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is complying with relevant health and safety legislation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that they maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards and minimises potential risks to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 72 Oakdale Drive, Heald Green, Cheadle SK8 3SW

Responsible individual: Amy Moulton

Registered manager: Emma Hadley

Inspector

Mazviita Makiyi, Social Care Inspector

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