

2590832

Registered provider: Thrive Childcare Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This private provider is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have experienced early childhood trauma and have emotional and behavioural needs due to these experiences.

The home's manager registered in September 2020. She holds a Level 4 Registered Manager's Award.

The registered manager has not been in day-to-day charge of the home since 24 September 2021. The responsible individual has kept oversight of the operation of the home in the registered manager's absence. An interim manager commenced in post on 22 November 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 2 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

This is the setting's first full inspection since being registered.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 November 2021

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the monitoring visit in February 2021, two children have moved into the home and three children have left. At the time of this inspection, one child lived at the home. Positive relationships with welcoming and nurturing staff, combined with clear daily routines, mean the child is making good progress across all areas of his development.

Focused support from staff and strong relationships with teachers promote the child's learning. As a result, after a long period away from formal education, the child now attends school full time, is enthusiastic about learning and brings work home from school to show staff his achievements. The child now has clear ambitions for his future and a college course is being sourced to help him achieve his career aspirations.

Staff take the child's health and well-being seriously. Children have been given appropriate advice and support by staff about how to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Practical and emotional support from staff have helped the child to attend routine health appointments and to face and overcome a fear of injections. Consequently, the child has a newfound confidence in attending appointments to help maintain his physical health. In addition, good support has helped the child to develop an understanding about what constitutes healthy relationships.

The child benefits from living in a well-maintained and homely environment that he and his peers have helped to design. For example, children have been involved redesigning and decorating a shed into an outside space for children to relax in and listen to music. Plans are also underway to improve a gaming area to make it more user-friendly for children.

A particular strength of the home is the attention that staff pay to ensuring the diversity needs of children are known and met. For example, staff ensure that children who have a faith can learn about and practise their faith according to their needs. This has extended to staff arranging for family members to celebrate religious festivals at the home. Supporting the individual diversity needs of children helps children to explore their identity and positively develop their self-esteem.

Three children have left the home in an unplanned way. However, staff provided support for each child's transition in keeping with the child's individual circumstances. For example, when it became unsafe for one child to remain living in the area that the home is located, staff arranged a holiday for the child, to give the placing authority an opportunity to identify a suitable place for the child to live.

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

Staff access a range of training which raises their awareness to their safeguarding responsibilities, including whistle-blowing and the potential signs and symptoms of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and criminal exploitation. This understanding helps staff to routinely assess and plan to reduce risks to the child's safety.

Staff work hard to ensure that the child feels cared for and that he can influence his care. This includes the child contributing to his plans and identifying with staff the responses that they can use to help him manage challenges that he might experience with his behaviour. Consequently, on the rare occasion that the child has become heightened, staff have been able to intervene quickly in an informed way to reduce risk.

Direct work with staff in partnership with other agencies helps children to develop a broader understanding of citizenship, British values and neighbourliness. With the oversight of staff, involvement in a charity event and developing positive relationships with neighbours have helped the child living at the home to appreciate the differences between people and the positive impact he can make to the wider community.

Positive and trusting relationships with staff and clear expectations about spending time away from the home mean that the child does not go missing from home. When children have previously been missing from the home, staff have followed local area protocols to help secure the child's safe return, including ensuring that the child is offered an independent return home interview.

Since the last inspection, there have been some significant incidents that have resulted in children needing to be held to support their safety and/or the safety of others. On two occasions, there is no record that the use of an unapproved hold by staff has been reflected on as an aspect of the post-incident review. This does not give the necessary assurance that the supervision of staff minimises potential risks to children.

At the time of this inspection, an allegation made against a member of staff was being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegation were considered to inform inspectors' judgements.

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

The registered manager has been absent from the home since September 2021. Since this time, the responsible individual has been supporting senior staff with the day-to-day oversight of the operation of the home.

The child is cared for by a small but consistent staff team. Rotas set out who will be on duty. However, the manager has not made a written assessment of any risks

arising from individual members of staff lone working with children. This means that risks presented by lone working may not have been identified.

Staff say they enjoy their work and new staff report that they have received a thorough induction. However, staff views about the individual support they receive from managers are variable. Records do not demonstrate that all staff are provided with supervision at the frequency set out in the organisation's policy. In addition, there was no record that a senior manager had reflected with the registered manager or duty staff, following a significant incident when the registered manager had been on call. A lack of evidence to demonstrate the timely and regular supervision of staff does not assure the regulator that all staff are provided with enough opportunity to review and develop their practice.

Managers have failed to ensure the appropriate vetting of staff. A lack of curiosity by managers means that they have not identified and acted on shortfalls in employment histories and references. Shortfalls in recruitment practice potentially leave children at risk of being cared for by adults who are not suitable.

Managers have not ensured that the home's statement of purpose is up to date and meets the requirements of regulation. For example, there is insufficient information about how the cultural and linguistic needs of children will be met. The document sets out that restorative justice is used as a model of practice. However, this is yet to be developed. In addition, the children's guide requires improvement and does not easily set out what children can expect from the home. These shortfalls mean that current information about the support offered by the home is not available to key stakeholders. These shortfalls are administrative and have not adversely affected the quality of care for children.

The responsible individual recognises that the absence of the registered manager has resulted in some shortfalls in the routine monitoring and review of the service. For example, an assessment of the quality of care has been completed. However, this has not been sent to the regulator within the required time frames. Independent visits to the home are routinely completed. However, for several months, the visitor has not gained any professional views to inform the assessment of the quality of care offered by the home. These shortfalls reduce the effectiveness of the internal and external oversight of the operation of the home.

Managers have responded to the two requirements and one recommendation raised at the monitoring visit. These include reviewing risk management arrangements and, more recently, the matching process. An interim manager has recently been appointed, who is expected to take up the day-to-day management of the home on completion of his induction period.

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 registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1))	6 January 2022
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))	23 December 2021
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a))	6 January 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand what they can expect from the home, including information about the day-to-day routines, how to make a complaint, how to access advocacy services and how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person should make a formal assessment of lone working arrangements and any implications for children's care, including any likely risks. This assessment should be recorded and available for inspection by Ofsted and placing authorities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.18)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff receive regular supervision. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2590832

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Thrive Childcare Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 72 Oakdale Drive, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 3SW

Responsible individual: Victoria Haywood

Registered manager: Tina Ratcliffe

Inspector

Alison Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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