

2591499

Registered provider: Vcare - 24 Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is managed and operated by a private provider and offers care for up to two children. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. The child met with the inspector during the visit.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 11 June 2024 and led the inspection.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

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: 5 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/07/2022	Full	Good
17/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff support the child living in this home to have a balanced life that helps them to attend school, build friendships and have time to relax. Routine and structure are important to the child, and the staff plan educational and social activities alongside familiar child-led play in the home. The staff also promote time outdoors, doing a favourite activity that the child enjoys.

The child has started attending a new school after a lengthy period of being educated at home. The child has good attendance and enjoys education. A gradual introduction to school took place, which was supported by staff from the home and school. The consistent approach used helped the child to settle back into school life quickly and to feel confident there.

Staff support the child to prepare for the future by helping them to expand their social circles. The child has made new friendships and is building relationships with local people through visiting local groups and shops. More recently, the child has been eating out at a local restaurant. Staff support the child to be as independent as they can and to learn new social skills.

The child is supported in several ways to have regular contact with the people who are important to them. Staff support face-to-face and virtual methods of communication. The child has photos around the home of their family, and they are encouraged to talk about them and their own identity. This helps the child to understand their life experiences and promotes a sense of belonging.

The manager has arranged for work to be carried out in the home to improve the environment. This work is not yet complete. Some areas of the home smell clean and fresh, but the paintwork, windowsills and skirting boards are dirty, and there are still damaged doors in the home. The window in the child's bedroom has a makeshift system for operating the blind, and the window is dirty and difficult to see through. This does not help the child to take pride in their home. The child needs staff support to access hygiene products, which hinders their independence.

The home's statement of purpose does not contain all the necessary information and is not easy to follow. This makes it difficult for those reading it to understand what the home is offering to children.

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

The manager and staff are clear about the specific risks that the child faces. These risks are well captured in the child's records and are regularly reviewed. While risks are reduced, managers and staff understand that this is partly because of the support they are offering. Staff remain alert to the signs that the child may be upset, and they

intervene early if they see these signs. Staff use discussion, or quiet support, and they are skilled at de-escalating situations. This helps the child to feel safe and use words to communicate their feelings.

The child does not go missing from home but would be at risk if they did because of their vulnerabilities. Staff have protocols in place and understand what to do if this happens. They are supporting the child to learn appropriate boundaries in relationships and how to interact safely with others. This gives the child a greater understanding of risks, and they are learning social skills.

The child has a history of self-harming. Incidents have reduced in frequency and severity. Therefore, no physical intervention techniques have been used. The child is supported to take small risks in a positive way. Staff set consistent boundaries and are clear in their expectations. They observe the child's response and monitor the situation. The child shows trust in the staff supporting them and can now use strategies to calm themselves.

The child is happy in the home. Although the child was not able to say whether they feel safe, they showed warmth, trust and affection towards staff. The child said that the best thing is their bedroom and being able to sleep in their big bed with their teddies. They could not think of anything that made them feel sad in the home. The child talks about the staff with humour and can identify the staff's skills and positive traits.

The child has made numerous allegations against staff over a prolonged period, which have later been retracted. The manager works closely with safeguarding professionals to ensure that the child is listened to and taken seriously. All staff follow the shared approach and ensure that they and the child are kept safe. The manager, staff and professionals review and continue to try and understand what the child may be trying to express at these times.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager promotes a child-focused approach in the home. He takes the lead in creating plans and has a clear sense of direction for the home. The manager keeps records and plans under regular review. This supports consistency in the team and ongoing progress.

The manager understands the strengths of the staff and the home and how these can be developed further. The home is on a journey of improvement. Some things are taking longer than the manager would like, but he persists and keeps moving forward with plans.

The managers and leaders carry out safer recruitment checks before new staff work in the home. New staff complete off-site training and an in-house induction day before shadowing colleagues, to give them time to get to know the child. This ensures that staff are trained and have the knowledge and skills to help them before they work with the child.

Staff feel supported by the manager and receive regular supervision. They receive further support in monthly team meetings. Staff share ideas and reflect on their practice together as a team. Several staff gave feedback during the inspection. They feel supported by the manager and have learned new skills from the training on offer to support the child.

Managers and leaders work closely with professionals. They seek feedback from other agencies to inform their planning. Professionals speak highly of the manager's knowledge of the child. The manager is confident to question and challenge professionals in the child's best interests. This promotes positive multi-agency working and transparency.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii)) The registered person must ensure that the home is clean and provides an environment that is homely and not institutionalised. This specifically relates to ensuring that repair works are carried out in a timely fashion and to a good standard and that the window in the child's bedroom is clean and has a functioning blind. Additionally, children's access to hygiene products in the bathroom should be reviewed, to support their growing independence. This requirement is restated.	18 July 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is developed and kept under review in line with regulation 16 and schedule 1. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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: 2591499

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Vcare - 24 Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 10, Halifax Way, Pocklington Industrial Estate,
Pocklington, York YO42 1NP

Responsible individual: Toni Carr

Registered manager: Luke Gomersall

Inspectors

Carol Jagger, Social Care Inspector
Ladean Wilson, Social Care Inspector

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