

2594859

Registered provider: Conquered Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to two children with emotional, social and special educational support needs, including learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. The home registered with Ofsted in February 2021 and has not previously been inspected.

The registered manager left in September 2021. There is an acting manager in post.

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.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 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	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: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the first full inspection since the home registered in February 2021. The first child moved into the home in June 2021 as a temporary move while waiting for a specialist provision. This child has now moved on. Another child has recently moved in and, due to their support needs, will be the only child living at the home. Managers and staff know children very well and have positive relationships with them.

Professionals said that staff quickly find consistent ways to support children, which help them settle into living at the home. The staff understand children's previous traumatic life experiences and the impact that these have on well-being and behaviour. Staff show kindness and patience, which helps children to build trusting relationships with them.

Staff have enabled both children to lead healthy lifestyles that include exercising and a balanced diet. One child has made very good progress, for the first time, to lose weight gained due to a medical condition. The child also developed a regular sleep pattern because of this lifestyle change, which helped them to achieve more positive behaviours. Managers prioritise children accessing health services so that referrals for specialist support happen without delay.

Children, with guidance and nurturing from staff, develop self-help skills to care for themselves. The privacy and dignity that staff respect and nurture help grow children's self-esteem and understanding of safe boundaries with adults.

Children regularly attend education provided by specialist teachers at the home. Staff work closely with teachers to ensure that timetables are followed and that shared learning opportunities are taken during activities. Staff work jointly with education professionals to build stable relationships that enable children to make progress with their learning.

Children take part in activities that benefit their health and spiritual well-being. One child started daily religious studies and became part of their local religious community. This was a long-desired wish of the child and their family. Children regularly access the local community. The staff have provided excellent support for children to get to know and develop friendships with local community members.

Children make progress in their independence and life skills. Cooking, gardening and domestic chores give important structure to one child's day. Staff understand the importance of encouraging independence skills to prepare children for their future.

Staff seek children's views. They use children's preferred individual communication methods. Staff put in place a communication system for one child to help them to

express their emotions to staff using pictures and coloured cards. This has quickly led to a reduction in aggressive behaviours towards staff.

Children benefit from living in a clean and spacious home. However, redecoration and minor repairs are needed to give a homely and inviting feel for the child who has recently moved in.

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

Staff make sure that children are safe. The manager ensures that staff have appropriate training and understand safeguarding procedures. Staff help children to stay safe through good levels of supervision. Staff have conversations with children to help them to understand consistent boundaries and expectations.

Staff use good relationships as a basis for managing behaviours and reducing risks. Positive behaviour is promoted and rewarded. Managers review the effectiveness of using sanctions and make changes to practice to use other methods, including restorative practice. This led to the child involved improving their behaviour and being able to suggest ideas to make amends.

For one child, the use of physical interventions was high. However, the staff's good understanding of the child's behaviour has led to a reduction in the frequency of incidents during their time at the home. Records of the interventions are very detailed and managers review the incidents using reflective supervision with staff.

Staff know the detail of children's positive behaviour support plans and make regular updates to these when things change. Support plans emphasise the importance of de-escalation techniques to avoid incidents. Staff know children very well and quickly take action, such as distraction and change of activity, when children start to show signs of distress.

Recruitment processes are robust and ensure that applicants are suitable to work with vulnerable children. Interviews with prospective staff explore how the applicant would deal with stressful situations. Prospective staff are expected to demonstrate how they would treat children with kindness and respect.

There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. Each child has a clear plan for staff to follow if they do go missing. This includes details of likely places to search and prompts for staff to take essential emergency medicines with them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been no registered manager in post since September 2021. The deputy manager has been appointed as the acting manager and intends to register with Ofsted. The home's leadership staff work closely together, and the acting manager is receiving coaching and support from the experienced responsible individual.

Staff value the strong teamwork that has quickly developed in the first four months of providing support to children. Staff feel supported by managers and trust them and their experience.

Staff have the skills and experience required to support children well. Leaders and managers encourage staff's self-development and learning. Staff can request funding from the provider to undertake additional qualifications and diploma courses above the minimum required standards.

Staff are motivated to find reading to expand their knowledge of conditions relating to children's diagnoses. One staff member joined a support group for parents and carers for a particular condition that their key child had.

Staff said how much they enjoy working at the home and described their enthusiasm for supporting children to enjoy their lives and make progress. External professionals said that the effort and dedication of managers have had a positive impact on children. One professional said that managers have worked particularly hard to meet the needs of a child who moved on from the home. The professional said that because of this work the impact of the move on the child had been reduced.

Managers know children's needs and how to support them. They are clear on the types of needs that the home can support and whether progress can be achieved before offering a place.

The provider has developed the monitoring and assurance systems since the home opened. The responsible individual visits the home regularly and knows the children and staff well. The responsible individual encourages professionals and children's families to provide challenge and feedback about the quality of care. There is a culture of continual development and learning to help the home to improve and grow.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children. In particular, ensure that maintenance issues are resolved quickly, and the decoration and furnishings are updated as needed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2594859

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Conquered Limited

Responsible individual: Jacqueline Patel

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jamie Cousins, Social Care Inspector

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