

2594952

Registered provider: Artemis Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home can care for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 1 September 2020.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

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: 14 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their starting points. Children enjoy nurturing and trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff know the children well, which means the staff understand how to support the children in making positive changes in all aspects of their lives.

Children are encouraged to participate in many activities in and outside the home, which are personalised to their own interests. This helps the children to develop their social skills. Children make progress in developing their relationships with professionals, and they make friendships with their peers because of the staff's commitment to the children. One professional said: 'This is one of the best providers we work with. They stand out.'

The staff plan and prepare well for the children who are moving on. The manager and staff complete individualised work with the children, in line with their needs, to help them prepare for moving on from the home. The staff and the manager are proactive in forging links with adult social care services when required. This ensures that the children receive ongoing help and support when they reach adulthood.

Children's attendance at school is good. Children make significant improvements in their ability to learn because of the way in which the staff support and prepare the children for their day ahead at school. Staff ensure that the education professionals are fully informed about the events in a child's life that may affect their day at school. Staff also support the children with additional learning in the home. Staff help the children to make decisions about the subjects that they wish to take, and they help the children to make important choices about their further education.

Children can have a say in how the home is decorated. This helps the children to take pride in their home. The home is furnished in a way that meets the children's physical needs. This reduces the need to replace furniture, as it is less likely to be damaged. A sensory room has been developed to help the children manage their feelings in a safe environment.

Staff form good relationships with the adults who are important to the children. This means that the staff can support the children to spend time with their families. Staff recognise that sometimes, family time can be distressing for the children. In these circumstances, the manager and staff support the child well, and make the necessary arrangements for this to be rearranged.

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

The manager and staff assess on a regular basis all the risks that the children face. The manager and staff ensure that all the children's safety plans are current, and

that they describe how best to help and support the children. The manager identifies when it would be either unsafe or unhelpful for another child to move into the home, because of how it may affect the stability and emotional welfare of the children already living in the home. She is proactive in taking steps to ensure this does not happen.

The manager and staff recognise when external expert support is needed to address specific aspects of a child's life, and they are proactive in sourcing and funding this. Staff and the manager make good use of the in-house therapeutic team to inform safety planning. This provides a holistic approach to meeting the children's needs.

The staff and the manager understand the importance of taking a therapeutic approach to help the children. The manager and staff consistently implement the advice that is given by the in-house therapeutic team and external agencies. Staff apply this approach when they manage the children's behaviour, so they do not require support from the emergency services to help them manage this.

Experienced staff know the children well. When children are upset, the staff implement a calm approach to help comfort the child. When necessary, the children are held to prevent them from hurting themselves or others, but the need for this is reducing. However, on one occasion, the staff did not explain to the child why they had been held. This oversight prevents the child from understanding why this was necessary, and how this may be avoided in the future.

The manager knows the children well. She identifies when the children's needs change, and she ensures that additional staff support is provided to keep the children safe. This means that unfamiliar staff provide care and support to the children. The staff who are less familiar with the children's needs have made unsafe decisions when managing the children's behaviour. This has required the more experienced staff to intervene to de-escalate some situations.

Staff and the manager advocate for the children well. They challenge the decision-making of other agencies in line with the needs of the children, and they communicate the children's wishes and feelings with other agencies. The children have access to an independent advocate who visits the home monthly. This has been particularly helpful in supporting one child to overcome some difficulties they were experiencing in school.

Staff and the manager ensure that the children attend all routine medical appointments. They advocate well for the children to ensure that they receive the appropriate treatment and services they require to meet their individual needs. The staff and manager make significant efforts to support children to overcome their fears. This ensures that the children's medical needs can be reviewed, and that they can access the most appropriate course of treatment.

Allegations made by children about staff members are dealt with swiftly. Investigations are conducted in line with the organisation's policy, and appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the children are safeguarded. The manager ensures

that the children are supported throughout the duration of any investigation, and that they are informed of the outcome. This reassures the children that staff are there to keep them safe.

Routine safeguarding enquiries are made in respect of all staff who work in the home. However, there have been some gaps in some staff members' employment histories, which have not been fully explored. This means the manager cannot be certain whether there are any safeguarding concerns about these periods in these individuals' lives.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has high expectations of the children. She leads by example, and she role models positive behaviour, which filters through to the staff team. The staff speak highly of her, stating that they feel 'supported', that she is 'amazing', that they 'cannot praise her enough', and that she and the deputy manager are 'the best managers we have ever had'.

The children enjoy a positive relationship with the manager. She has a visible presence in the home, and she has clearly developed a fine balance of conducting her managerial duties, while also spending time with the children. This means that the children find her approachable, and that she knows the children well.

The manager and deputy manager have developed safeguarding tools that have been disseminated across other homes in the organisation. The manager is also part of the strategic planning team in the organisation, in order to identify areas in which to improve practice and outcomes for children across the organisation.

Team meetings are held on a regular basis, and they are well attended by all staff. They are reflective in nature and they provide the manager with an opportunity to address any identified areas for improvement across the team. They are also seen as an opportunity for staff to contribute towards the learning culture, which the organisation has embraced.

The home provides new staff with an induction to the home, which ensures that all of the permanent staff know how to meet the needs of the children well. Staff speak highly of the induction process and of their supervision, which is regular, reflective and personalised to each staff member. The manager also uses supervision to address, record and monitor any shortfalls in practice. This helps the manager to review practices in the home in order to provide a better level of care for the children.

The manager regularly reviews important documents that are completed by the staff. She identifies areas for improvement, and she addresses this with the staff concerned. However, this is not consistent across all areas. The auditing and tracking system is not wholly effective. Some documents do not have any management oversight, some documents are not consistently signed as having been read by staff, and it is unclear whether some documents are current or historical.

This could lead to staff applying an outdated strategy when managing a child's behaviour, or making incorrect decisions about whom the children are able to spend time with.

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 ensure that— within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(c)).	24 June 2022
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) and (2)(h)).	27 June 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home has enough suitably trained staff on duty to meet the assessed needs of all the children in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)
- The registered person should assess if restriction of contact is necessary in the interests of the child, to safeguard them or to promote their welfare. This decision must be agreed with the placing authority, where possible, except in an emergency situation, where the placing authority must be notified within 24 hours. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.16)

- The registered person should ensure that the recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('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: 2594952

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Artemis Support Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Queens Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1RN

Responsible individual: Kerry Duerden

Registered manager: Kirsty Donaldson

Inspectors

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector

Louise Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector

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