

2611110

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to seven children aged between eight and 17 who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2021.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 30 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/08/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2022	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
05/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have good relationships with staff. They regularly seek out staff to spend time with them and staff respond with interest and care. This encourages children to communicate their wishes and feelings, while feeling respected and cared for. These relationships are helping children to make progress, particularly with their social and emotional skills.

Staff strongly promote family time. Staff take a proactive lead and arrange this directly with children's family members. This approach leads to a relaxed and natural arrangement for children. The manager is a strong advocate for children spending quality time with their families when this is appropriate.

Staff provide children with new experiences. They take children for days out to theme parks and local attractions. Children regularly enjoy activities with the staff and manager. Since the last inspection, one child has been on a plane for the first time. Children have pets and these are cared for by staff and children. Staff tailor activities to the children's specific interests and capture these in individualised memory books.

Staff work closely with schools to promote education. Staff regularly send information to school and engage in meetings about the children's education. Staff advocate for children to return to school when they have been suspended. However, when children are not in school, there are not always clear routines for them.

Children's progress is celebrated by staff. Staff understand children's histories and past experiences. They measure children's progress against these starting points. Staff proudly display children's certificates recognising their achievements.

Moves on from the home are well managed. When children move on, effective support from staff helps them to manage change and experience positive endings. Staff remain in contact with children who have left and visit them in their new home. When children move in, this is thoughtfully planned. Consequently, children settle well in the home.

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

Staff understand the risks for children. They work hard to reduce these, particularly when the children are away from the home. Staff often speak with children about substance misuse, peer pressure and staying safe. When staff are concerned about children's safety, they appropriately raise concerns with the police and children's social care.

Children do not go missing from home. There are well-developed plans to help children spend time away from the home safely. Children follow the rules set out by the staff.

Staff tackle bullying and conflict between children. When issues arise, staff speak with children to help them to reflect on their actions. Staff intervene early and regularly remind children of the rules and expectations. Staff create opportunities to promote positive relationships between children.

Restrictions are in place to keep children safe online. These measures are generally effective in restricting children's access to harmful content. However, children can access some social media sites which include content that is not age appropriate. One child also watches videos of gamers which sometimes include inappropriate language.

Allegations are managed well. Leaders share information with partner agencies and lessons are learned from poor practice. If staff practice falls short, managers address this and provide further training and support. On one occasion, there was a missed opportunity to obtain a child's views during an investigation. However, this had no impact on the child's safety.

Physical interventions are sometimes used in the home. The use of physical intervention is reported to the child's social worker. Children and staff receive effective debriefs where lessons are learned. However, written plans are not always updated to reflect the lessons learned from these reviews. In addition, managers' reviews of physical interventions do not always identify poor recording. As a result, reasons for the use of physical intervention and its duration are not always explored fully. However, there has been no impact on children's safety from this shortfall.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a stable figure in the home who has close relationships with the children and is deeply involved in their lives. As a result, he is highly aware of the progress made by children.

Two experienced deputies support the manager and help in the day-to-day running of the home. Children have good relationships with the leadership team and seek them out.

Staff say they are well supported by the managers. They receive regular supervision and debriefs following incidents. There is a strong focus on promoting positive mental health and well-being for staff.

Staff communicate effectively with children's families and other professionals. Staff work collaboratively with professionals to support care planning for children and support the child's wider family. One parent said that staff are 'amazing' and are always available.

The responsible individual carries out audits on the staffing agency used by the provider. This ensures that the agency is compliant with the home's expectations of safer recruitment. As a result, agency staff who come to work at the home are safe to work with children.

There are some weaknesses in management oversight of health and safety. For example, there was broken crockery in the garden and paint was not stored safely. In addition, the external fire risk assessment needs updating.

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, The 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 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, the manager must have effective oversight of health and safety, to reduce risks for children.	8 November 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that records of restraint scrutinise staff practice effectively and ensure that records and children's plans are accurate.	8 November 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are given supportive care and boundaries which promote positive day-to-day routines for them, particularly when they are not at school. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

- The registered person should ensure that staff are able to identify when children are at risk of accessing content on social media that is not age appropriate. Monitoring systems should help staff identify and then take action on risks identified. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)
- The registered person should encourage children to express their views on whether they feel safe in the home. Their views should be considered when investigating allegations made about staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.11)

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: 2611110

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Registered provider address: Goringe Accountants, Waterside, 1650 Arlington Business Park, Theale, Berkshire RG7 4SA

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Adam Law

Inspectors

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector
Kerry Howarth, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024