

2611110

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The privately owned home is registered to care for up to seven children. The statement of purpose states that the home cares for children between the ages of eight and 17.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 9 August 2021.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 July 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: 1 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
05/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently three children living in the home. The registered manager has worked hard to improve how assessments are carried out when decisions are made about new children moving into the home.

Children are provided with a range of positive and first-time experiences. They were looking forward to their planned holiday to the Isle of Wight this summer and were busy planning trips and activities with the staff. These life-enriching opportunities broaden children's experiences and create childhood memories.

Staff create beautiful life-journey books that contain photos and keepsakes. This helps children to remember the good times and to reflect on what they have achieved.

The home is nicely decorated and there is a genuine family atmosphere. During the inspection, staff were seen supporting the children with their arts and crafts and chosen activities, such as gymnastics and karaoke. The children enjoy regular outings with the staff, including going to the bowling alley and the cinema and enjoying meals out at restaurants. To support children's hobbies, staff have asked at the local leisure centre about swimming lessons and gymnastics classes. This helps the children to feel wanted and gives them the opportunity to explore skills and interests outside of the home.

Staff are creative in how they get important messages across to children. They spend time researching topics and provide educational resources to inform conversations. Cultural awareness nights are inspired by the children's willingness to share their personal identities and backgrounds with others. This helps all the children to understand each other's beliefs, customs and family heritage. One child recently explored their St Vincent and the Grenadines ancestry.

Staff work resourcefully to support children's education. They drive children to their alternative provisions and liaise with virtual schools and school providers to help ensure that the right provisions are found. Staff supported one child to look around their new school before it closed for the summer. The child told the inspector this preparation was helpful. This forward-thinking approach by staff gives children the chance to prepare for their futures and reduce worries and fears of meeting new people and going to unfamiliar places for the first time.

Staff support fun and engaging activities when children see their families. The staff listen to the children's feelings around seeing their loved ones and will change the frequency and type of visits to help the children to feel more relaxed and happier.

Staff have supported one child to have a Sunday roast with their parent in the home, while another child enjoyed having their family over for a summer barbecue. This helps children to build their relationships with their families in a familiar setting, with familiar staff who can help manage these relationships if needed.

Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills by being actively involved in the day-to-day running of the home, for example, tidying their bedrooms, learning how to budget and cooking their meals. This helps children to develop self-reliance and self-worth, and makes them active participants in the home they live in.

Staff support children to move on from the home in a planned and organised way. One child has recently been supported to move abroad, in line with their wishes and relevant plans. Staff worked incredibly hard to make this a successful move and supported the child to apply for their passport and attend the necessary vaccination appointments. The staff obtained a pet passport for the child's cat to travel with him and packed memorabilia and photos of the child's time spent in the home. This is a significant accomplishment for the child and all the staff involved. The child's parent said, 'I will be forever grateful for what the staff have achieved for my son.'

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

Children feel safe and listened to. They are all aware of who they can approach if they have concerns or complaints and said that they appreciate the guidance and advice they receive from the staff.

Staff prioritise children's safety. They are aware of each child's abilities and vulnerabilities. Staff offer sound support and advice to the children, and this educates and equips them to understand potential risks and how to help avoid them. When concerns are identified, the registered manager acts quickly to review the strategies for staff to support the children and, when necessary, the suitability of children continuing to live in the home.

Staff follow procedures for responding to concerns about the safety of a child. When child protection concerns are raised, these are immediately shared with the relevant agencies and the registered manager addresses any needed actions in a timely and appropriate way.

The registered manager has written a well-informed and collaborative assessment of the home's premises and local area. This includes the views of staff, local safeguarding professionals, police and exploitation teams. However, it is not clear how the information about risks identified in this assessment is being used to reduce these localised risks. This is a missed opportunity for the registered manager to demonstrate how he is reducing the risks in the community.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is very good at liaising with external agencies such as social workers, schools, police officers and relevant safeguarding agencies. His conscientious approach ensures that all professionals are kept up to date with important information and that advice and support for the children is put in place promptly and effectively when needed.

The registered manager's monitoring systems are good and demonstrate he has clear managerial oversight of the home. The registered manager is reflective, focused and highly driven in delivering a person-centred approach to care. The staff say he is approachable and always makes time to listen to the children and the staff.

The registered manager is clear on the strengths and weaknesses of the home and uses the quality of care reviews effectively.

Staff have the necessary skills and training to meet children's needs. The registered manager uses research to provide additional guidance to staff when needed. This helps to increase the staff's awareness of the children's risks and vulnerabilities.

Staff supervisions are timely and reflective and aid their professional development. Staff say that they feel well supported by their line manager and can speak to them outside of their arranged supervisions. The systematic approach of asking safeguarding questions in staff supervision helps to build staff's confidence in how they care for children.

Senior leaders have recently recruited a clinical lead consultant and therapist. Their planned roles will be to provide weekly therapy to the children and to contribute to the children's care plans.

The registered manager has met all the requirements from the last inspection.

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 review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. In particular, the registered manager should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	1 November 2022

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: 5 Theale Lakes Business Park, Moulden Way,
Sulhamstead, Reading, Berkshire RG7 4GB

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Adam Law

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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