

2617499

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Ltd

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 organisation. It provides care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties and children who have experienced trauma.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 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: 4 May 2023

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
04/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. All were spoken to and were positive about their experiences. Two children have recently moved in, while another child has been living in the home for three years. Children have nurturing relationships with a core staff team who value them and are committed to supporting their well-being.

Well-planned moves help children feel valued and well cared for. The manager has improved how children are welcomed into the home. Detailed planning assessments consider children's needs and reflect the views of children who are already living in the home. This helps children feel included and supported.

Children are helped by staff to attend school or an alternative education setting. When children are on a reduced timetable, staff ensure additional support to promote learning. If a provision or support is not right for the child, the manager advocates for children in accordance with their wishes. This has included helping a child move to a preferred new school.

Staff promote children's health. Staff and managers monitor health needs and all children have health plans. Staff support children to attend health appointments and identify and seek support when it is required.

Children spend time with those people who are important to them. The managers and staff promote children's relationships with their family. This includes supporting families to visit the home or taking children to spend time with their family, in line with local authority plans. Children also receive support with friendships. This helps to reduce stigma and isolation for children and promotes identity and the building of social relationships.

Children live in a large, detached home in a semi-rural environment. The home is welcoming and shared spaces have modern decor. Children's rooms are decorated and furnished to each child's taste.

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

Children feel safe and supported. Staff build trusting relationships with children. Staff are aware of safeguarding procedures and encouraged to raise any potential concerns immediately.

Staff and managers promote children's independence according to their individual need, while protecting them from unsafe situations or unsafe people. Assessed risk plans are individualised, detailed and reviewed regularly. Children are encouraged to think freely about the choices they make, as far as possible, but this is balanced with safeguards to

prevent children placing themselves at harm. This means children feel respected but are also kept safe.

Staff are both proactive and reactive in respect of issues around children smoking or misusing substances. Staff help children, including giving advice and referring them to cessation services. Staff also put boundaries in place to prevent substance misuse where possible.

The registered person has improved the response to children when they go missing. When children leave home without permission, staff act without delay and follow identified procedures. This includes coordinating with other agencies, such as the police, to ensure children are safe.

A comprehensive assessment of suitability of the local area has been completed, and this is updated regularly. This helps staff to predict where children are likely to be and where or when they might be at risk in the local community. Staff also know how to respond on these occasions to make sure children are safe, in line with the assessment.

Staff are trained in physical intervention techniques and the new manager has improved how staff respond during incidents, with a focus on de-escalation. However, the previous manager did not always scrutinise or review incidents when intervention was necessary. This reduces the opportunities to ensure actions are proportionate and to help develop a culture of good and reflective practice.

Leaders and managers have overseen the refurbishment of the home. However, on one occasion when external building work was being carried out, risk mitigation measures were not put in place before work started. This led to a child placing themselves at risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been changes to the management team since the inspection in May 2023. The previous manager left the home in November 2023, before they were registered. A new manager started in January 2024 and is registered with Ofsted.

Professionals and parents have provided positive feedback about the staff and manager. One social worker said, 'In terms of keeping him safe they do a good job and they advocate for him a lot... and communication is good.' One parent said, 'They have been very reassuring from the start. They are listening to her. The manager has already come out with strategies to help.'

The manager is building a positive ethos across the staff team. The manager has reduced staff turnover as well as the use of agency staff. Staff and children spoke positively about the new manager.

Staff have regular supervision. The quality of support and supervision is good and includes space for reflection. Safeguarding concerns are discussed and actions set. Team

meetings are also held regularly and are used to build and develop good practice in the staff team.

The manager follows safer recruitment processes. New staff receive a suitable induction. There is comprehensive training that is delivered both online and face to face. Staff said they feel supported to care for the children.

The manager and responsible individual have developed internal monitoring and reviewing systems. When staff practice has fallen short, the manager has conducted detailed internal investigations, which have included disciplinary action when necessary. However, external monitoring by the independent person includes a high number of announced visits. This reduces the intended safeguards of this form of monitoring.

The manager ensures there is an appropriate budget in place to meet children's needs. However, children and staff do not have a shared understanding of how some finance is accessed and spending monitored. This lack of understanding is compounded by the children's guide being unclear in this area and not reflecting the 'family-style' values outlined in the home's statement of purpose. The manager acknowledges that further work is necessary to ensure children and staff have a shared understanding in this area.

The manager is suitably experienced and is working towards the level 5 qualification. However, having also previously been the manager of another home, they are out of the required time frame for completing this qualification.

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
A person may only manager a children's home if- having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children— The person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children. For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person by the relevant date, attained – The Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare; or a qualification which the registered provider considered to be equivalent to the level 5 diploma The relevant date is – In the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home. a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma. (Regulation 28 (1)(b)(i) (2)(c)(i) (3)(a))	31 March 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. In particular, when maintenance at the home is being undertaken, risks relating to the work should be

promptly assessed and mitigated to reduce risk to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should ensure that they lead a team which provides high-quality care for all children living in the home. They must lead and manage the home in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the home's statement of purpose. In particular, when the home's ethos and values are to replicate family life, financial budgets for children should be shared in a way that matches these values. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they make best use of information from external and internal monitoring. In particular, managers should ensure visits by an independent person include an appropriate number of unannounced visits. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2617499

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 33A Portsmouth Road, Southampton SO19 9BA

Responsible individual: Steven Cairns

Registered manager: Caprice Haines

Inspectors

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

Daniel Rankin, Social Care Inspector

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