

2617499

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Limited

Assurance 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.

An acting manager has been in post since May 2023 and is currently applying to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 26 September 2023

Date of last inspection: 4 May 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Outcome from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Findings from the inspection

Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. Both children have lived at the home since the last inspection.

Staff support children to learn. They advocate well for one child regarding their education. Staff support the child in school and encourage home learning.

Families and professionals highlight positive communication from the staff. They say that staff support children well.

The home has external closed-circuit television surveillance for security and alarms on children's bedroom doors. Not all children have signed consent for this monitoring from their social workers or parents. This could impact unnecessarily on children's privacy.

The house requires several home improvements. There are weeds in the gardens, and the decking is broken in places. The general maintenance inside the home is poor. The hallway needs painting and the carpet in the games room needs replacing.

Safer recruitment systems have improved. Some new members of staff have started working at the home. However, there continues to be challenges with the recruitment of staff. Lots of agency workers are used. On occasion, agency workers have outnumbered permanent staff.

There has been one incident of restraint since last inspection. Staff use de-escalation techniques to avoid restraints when possible. However, the recording of the restraint is limited and does not include full details about the hold used. The child was not offered a debrief afterwards.

Children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans fail to include all known risks. The risks regarding children accessing smoking paraphernalia and earning money through cash work are not covered in children's risk assessments. There are limited discussions with children to support them in understanding risks and reducing them.

Missing-from-care episodes do not happen regularly. There was an incident where a child went missing from the home without staff being immediately aware, despite the child having two members of staff to support them. There was no follow up from managers about how this happened. Following missing-from-home episodes, return home interviews are not routinely carried out by local authorities. The staff do not

consistently request these. Therefore, work to reduce further incidents may be missed.

The manager has been in post since May 2023. She is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted. The manager is aware of the areas of the home that require development and improvement.

Staff supervision sessions take place regularly. This helps staff to feel supported and develop their practice.

Managers ensure that notifications to Ofsted and any referrals to the local authority designated officer are made promptly. Internal monitoring has improved; however, the manager's quality of care reports are still not sent to Ofsted in a timely manner. External monitoring does not include feedback from professionals and families who work with the home. This limits oversight of the home's effectiveness.

The manager has met three of the six requirements from the last inspection. Three requirements have not been met and have been restated.

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

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 staff— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(vii)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	3 November 2023
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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	3 November 2023
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—	3 November 2023

the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(b)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a))	24 November 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is decorated and maintained to a consistently good standard throughout. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that no more than half the staff on duty at the home at any one time, day or night, are from an external agency. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.17)
- The registered person should ensure that the internal quality of care review is sent to Ofsted within the required time frame. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2617499

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Residential Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Sajida Kiyanni

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Leanne Lyon, Social Care Inspector

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