

2633107

Registered provider: Charis Services for Children Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation and provides care for up to four children who may experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

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

There has been no registered manager since 6 June 2025.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 July 2025

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 30 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/04/2024	Full	Good
11/07/2023	Full	Good
08/06/2022	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a pleasant and comfortable home where they create fond memories. Photos reflecting the enjoyable times children have had with staff and each other are on display. Children talk with enthusiasm about the various activities they enjoy, such as fishing and watching banger racing.

All children access some form of education. One child who had not been attending education now engages well with a home tutor. Another child has improved their school attendance and has successfully taken their GCSEs. All children aspire for their future and have identified courses they wish to pursue in the next academic year.

All children say they feel safe and have trusted adults who they can talk to. One child said, 'This is the best home I have lived in.' Children know that their views are important and valued by staff. All children have made progress from their starting points.

Children and staff interact positively with each other. They enjoy meals and outings together. Children enjoy nurturing experiences, such as head massages and having staff's pet dogs in the home to visit. One child said, 'I have built resilience through living with other children in this home.'

Children have pets. There are currently two rabbits, and children are involved in their care. Having these pets has helped children build a connection and learn how to nurture animals. This has been positive, especially at times when children have struggled emotionally.

Generally, children have planned transitions to and from the home. However, one child moved on from the home due to staff being unable to meet their needs effectively. These behaviours were unknown to leaders, managers and staff at the time the child moved into the home, and they escalated quickly. Although the child moved on from the home, their move was managed with sensitivity and included discussions and meetings with relevant professionals. Staff were able to support the child with an introductory visit to the home they moved to. This helped the child have a positive experience moving on.

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

There are clear strategies in place to support staff in managing unwanted behaviours. Physical restraints are only used as a last resort and to keep children and others safe, mainly through low-level holds or guides. Restraints are used proportionately in line with children's care plans, and there is good oversight of these from leaders and managers.

Staff know how to respond when children make allegations. Allegations are dealt with promptly, and swift action is taken to keep children safe. This means that children's voices are well considered when they raise concerns.

When children go missing from home, staff are responsive. Staff successfully ensure that children return home safely. This has helped to reduce the number of missing-from-home incidents. Despite this, staff do not always ensure that children receive a return home interview from their placing local authority. This is a missed opportunity to fully investigate why the child went missing and explore strategies to prevent a reoccurrence.

Children do not always receive timely direct work to address the risks they face. Conversations have been recorded inconsistently in children's records, making them difficult to navigate. As a result, some incidents have not been addressed as promptly and effectively as possible. Leaders and managers are aware of this, and work has begun to improve the quality of recording and review the effectiveness of the actions taken by staff.

Safer recruitment checks are thorough. This helps ensure that people who work at the home are safe to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager left the home in June 2025. Since the last inspection, monitoring arrangements have been poor, and systems in place have not been used effectively. The deputy manager has since stepped into the role of managing the home. There are plans for this manager to apply to register with Ofsted.

Not all staff have received regular supervision. This means that some staff have not had the opportunity to fully reflect on their practice, consider their development, or undergo routine appraisal of their performance.

Safeguarding notifications are not always sent to the regulator in a timely manner. As a result, the regulator has been limited in understanding what incidents have occurred in the home and the actions that have been taken in response.

Staff communicate effectively with external professionals, including social workers, education and healthcare professionals, and children's family members, to ensure an open dialogue that supports each child's needs. However, leaders and managers have failed to obtain local authority care plans for some children. As a result, the information held by children's local authorities has not been incorporated into the plans that have been devised at the home. Leaders and managers have recognised their delayed request for this vital information and have plans to address it. Despite this, leaders, managers and staff provide social workers with regular progress reports for each child. They also attend professional meetings and reviews.

Following a child moving on from the home, admissions processes have been enhanced. Leaders and managers were proactive in evaluating and reviewing what happened. As a result, they are more robust in seeking further information when it is unclear, communicating with other professionals who know the child and ensuring that their initial assessments consider the skills and experience of the staff team.

The quality of the independent visitor's reports is variable. This is because they do not consistently reflect when all children are present, nor do they always obtain the views of relevant professionals. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that the independent visitor has all the required information and feedback to make an informed assessment of the home.

Leaders and managers are aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. They have an action plan in place to rectify the identified vulnerabilities.

External feedback about the home is positive. A grandparent and a social worker gave positive feedback about the care children receive. One social worker said, 'Staff act as a good advocate for [name of child] and have established a good relationship with them, and they are well supported.'

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— 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; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi))	29 August 2025
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) (2)(h)) In particular, ensure that the manager has oversight of actions taken by staff to support children following incidents.	29 August 2025
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—	29 August 2025

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; The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (5))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))	29 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that serious incidents are notified to Ofsted in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure that leaders and managers obtain full and relevant information from placing authorities before children move into the home. This will help them inform relevant plans and fully understand the child's needs and how to meet them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)

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: 2633107

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Charis Services for Children Ltd

Registered provider address: Richard Place Dobson, 1 to 7 Station Road, Crawley
RH10 1HT

Responsible individual: Sara Milner

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Karen Flanagan de Martinez, Social Care Inspector

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