

2641767

Registered provider: Real Care Support

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for up to three children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties or learning disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 September 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: 7 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/11/2023	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/10/2022	Full	Inadequate
26/04/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home and two children have moved into the home. Both children felt safe living in the home and shared positive relationships with staff.

The home provides a large, comfortable and well-maintained environment for children. Children are supported to personalise their rooms to reflect their taste. The children share positive, nurturing relationships with a committed staff team. This has helped children to build trusting relationships with staff and develop a sense of belonging.

Initial assessments of children's needs fully consider how these individual needs will be managed. However, there is a lack of robust assessment to fully explore the compatibility of the needs of new children moving into the home with the existing group of children. This shortfall has led to some children having negative experiences when living together. Furthermore, this has contributed to one child only living in the home for a short period of time.

One child is currently attending college and has healthy routines and structures in place. One child is not yet attending a school and is supported by a tutor at home. There has been a significant delay in finding a suitable education provision in the local area to meet the child's needs. A child who recently moved from the home also experienced the same significant delay. The lack of a suitable education provision for children has hindered their educational progress and impacted on their routines. Leaders and managers have escalated this issue effectively, and an appropriate school has recently been identified.

Staff promote children's health needs, and the children are registered with relevant health professionals. The home benefits from therapeutic input from in-house therapists who work at the home several days a week. This ensures that children receive timely support for their emotional health. The therapists also contribute to staff training, form part of the discussions when children's initial referrals are being considered and provide ongoing advice and support to the staff team.

Children are supported to develop independence skills, including budgeting, cooking and cleaning. This helps to ensure that they have the necessary skills when preparing to move out of the home. Children are also supported to engage in a range of different activities and to go on holiday. The staff supported one child to have a prom experience due to not having this opportunity with their school. The staff supported the child to buy a prom dress and created some special memories.

Key-work sessions are effective in supporting children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff also use this opportunity to gain the child's wishes and views. Children also benefit from having access to an independent advocate. This provides

children the opportunity to raise any concerns and helps to ensure that children are listened to.

Staff support children to see family and friends. Staff supported one child to stay overnight in an apartment back in her home area to visit her friends. Staff also support children to rebuild relationships with family members and ensure that children have positive relationships. This provides children with a sense of identity.

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

Risk management plans are detailed and identify any known or emerging risks for children. Staff are informed of any changes so that they understand the action they should take to keep children safe. However, written plans do not always contain all agreed strategies. This has not had an impact on children as staff have taken effective action to keep children safe.

When children go missing from the home, there is a proactive response from staff to quickly locate them. This is well coordinated with partner agencies. In line with missing-from-home protocols, staff carry out local area searches for children. Children are provided with an opportunity to speak to an independent person to raise any concerns.

When a child makes an allegation, safeguarding procedures are followed. There have been several allegations made since the last inspection. Leaders and managers worked jointly with safeguarding professionals to ensure that appropriate action was taken. Effective action has been taken by managers and leaders to deal with any concerns in relation to staff practice.

Each child has a behaviour support plan in place. Strategies have been discussed with the in-house therapists to ensure that they will be effective for the individual child's needs and triggers. The staff use a trauma-informed model and therapeutic parenting to support children to manage their emotions and support more positive behaviours.

Physical restraint is used as a last resort to keep children safe. Records provide details of the hold, the debrief with the child and management oversight. However, leaders and managers have failed to identify that the staff who were involved in the restraint have also completed the debrief with the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. The manager is committed to improving the outcomes for the children in her care, and she demonstrates a child-centred approach.

There have been some changes in the staffing of the home since the last inspection. However, children have received care from a dedicated and committed staff team. The use of agency staff has been required when one child's needs escalated. However, they always worked alongside permanent staff to ensure continuity of care.

Staff are either qualified or are currently working towards an appropriate qualification. Staff have completed all mandatory training. They have completed safeguarding training and additional training in relation to the child's risks and needs. This helps them to understand their role in safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare. However, recent training attended by the team had not been added to the training matrix to provide an up-to-date record of all the training completed by staff.

Regular team meetings provide staff an opportunity to discuss each child's progress and any changes in their needs. The meetings are used to share relevant research and test staff knowledge on safeguarding practice. Workshops also form part of the meetings to provide a further opportunity for staff reflection and development.

The manager recognises when children's needs are not being met in the home. There is evidence of working with the placing authority to make decisions on children's care. Reflective practice sessions take place when children move out of the home, and the manager uses a 'lessons learned' reflection process to try and improve future practice.

Safe recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that only suitable people work with the child living in the home. Leaders and managers also ensured that agency staff had relevant checks in place before working in the home.

Staff who were spoken to describe a supportive environment. Staff receive regular supervision and have an opportunity to reflect on their practice. Staff also complete yearly appraisals to ensure that they have opportunities to develop.

The manager uses various monitoring and review tools. However, management oversight of the home is not always effective. The manager had failed to identify several inaccuracies contained in the Annex A data after this had been delegated to the senior staff members. . Additionally, the monitoring and oversight of leaders and managers have not identified the shortfalls found during the inspection. This means that action has not always been taken to improve the quality of care.

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 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))	1 November 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Strategies for staff to use to keep children safe should be clearly detailed in children's written plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, by a person independent of the hold. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)

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: 2641767

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Real Care Support

Registered provider address: 17 Rose Terrace, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 1EB

Responsible individual: Debra Hesford

Registered manager: Jordanne Roberts

Inspector

Suzanne Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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