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2645858

Registered provider: Helpful Investments Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is managed and run by a private company.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in September 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCIFF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 March 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not previously inspected		

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the home's first inspection since its registration on 7 September 2021. There are currently two children living at the home. There have been no placement breakdowns, disruptions or failures since the home's registration.

Children benefit from well planned, highly individualised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives. Children enjoy good relationships with staff and they sustain their positive attachments. Staff provide children with continuity of care so they have consistency and stability in their lives. Children reported, 'It's way better here. You can have a crack with the staff and they help you with your needs.'

Children are registered with a doctors surgery, dentists and opticians and have access to these services, as required. Medical consent is obtained so staff are clear about the types of health decisions that are charged and delegated to them.

Children make good progress in relation to their individual starting points across aspects of their welfare, physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. Staff promote family time for the children. Consequently, children sustain their close relationships with the people that are most important to them.

Children attend school or other alternative educational provision with good support and encouragement from staff. Staff work closely with the providers of the children's education to support their attendance, educational engagement and learning.

One child is currently home tutored and is on a reduced educational timetable of 10 hours home tuition each week. That said, this child was not engaged in any education previously. A social worker reported, 'The fact that she's engaging in any education is amazing.'

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

Children are kept safe and report that they feel safe living at the home. Risks associated with the children are well known and understood by staff. The use of clear risk assessment and safe working practices promotes the safety and well-being of the children.

Children rarely go missing from the home. To date, there have only been two missing from home episodes. On the rare occasion that a child has gone missing, staff work closely with the police and placing authorities to secure the child's safe return. A social worker reported, 'The staff and the manager are amazing and they go above and beyond. There is a good team around the child. The manager is really good at challenging and she's proactive in doing that.'

There have been no complaints from children or any other third parties. Children spoken too raised no issues or concerns and had no complaints about the home. Children know how to make a complaint and their rights are promoted effectively.

Staff are trained in child protection so they know how to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse. Allegations of abuse are taken seriously and these are reported to the appropriate authorities to support and protect the children from harm.

There has been one recent allegation of abuse. A strategy meeting is being arranged by a child's social worker to address the allegation being made. Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities to ensure that the right action is taken by the right individuals to promote the safety and well-being of the children.

Staff promote children's positive behaviour and ensure that the use of consequences is kept to an absolute minimum. A social worker reported, 'My experience of her being here has been really positive. She's regulated and supported by staff.'

The use of restraint, if used at all, is only ever used as a last resort to protect children from actual harm. There has been one restraint since the home's registration and this involved the registered manager of the home. However, the restraint record contains the registered manager's oversight and had not been impartially or independently scrutinised.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home provides children with a physically safe, spacious, warm, comfortable and homely living environment. Health and safety matters are managed effectively to ensure that a safe environment is consistently maintained for children, visitors and staff.

Children's bedrooms are appropriately personalised in accordance with their needs, wants and wishes. However, one child's bedroom contained evidence of property damage with a large hole in the bedroom wall. The wall now requires replastering and repainting.

The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in September 2021. The manager demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operations of the home. Children benefit from a home that is managed efficiently and effectively.

The manager ensures that the home is properly staffed and resourced to meet the needs and numbers of the children. Staff employed are recruited and vetted carefully. This ensures that only safe and suitable people are employed to care for the children.

Staff benefit from regular, professional supervision to support them in their roles as children's primary caregivers. One staff member reported, 'This is the most supported I've felt within a care company.'

Staff meet the aims and objectives as set out in the home's statement of purpose. The statement of purpose was updated in January 2022. However, a copy of the revised statement has not been sent to Ofsted to ensure that the regulator is aware of the home's recent staff changes.

An independent person visits the home to review the quality of the children's care and the home's arrangements to safeguard children and promote their well-being. These visits help the registered manager to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The manager makes good use of the home's external and internal monitoring activities to secure the home's continuing improvement.

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 ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This relates to the impartial oversight of any restraints involving the registered manager.	18 April 2022
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)).	18 April 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that children are in full-time education while they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the Children Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 5.14, page 28). This relates specifically to providing children with additional educational activities, if required.

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the Children Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 3.9, page 15). This relates to repairing the damaged wall in a child's bedroom.

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: 2645858

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Helpful Investments Limited

Registered provider address: 31 BRIDGE STEET, ABERYSTWYTH, CEREDIGION, SY23 1QB

Responsible individual: Lesley Hearne

Registered manager: Sara Osborne

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, Social Care Inspector

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