

# 2662751

Registered provider: Holywell Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider.

It is registered to provide care for up to one child with social and emotional needs.

One child is currently being cared for in this home. This child spoke to the inspector as part of the inspection.

There has been no registered manager since the 15 March 2024. The acting manager has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

### Inspection dates: 26 and 27 February 2025

|                                                                                           |             |
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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
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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:** 13 September 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            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 13/09/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 25/10/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The child has lived in the home for a long time. Staff know the child, their interests, and behaviours well. The child has positive relationships with the adults that care for them. The child trusts staff and feels safe and settled in the home.

The home is clean, tidy and appropriately furnished. The communal areas have been refurbished and redecorated since the last inspection. The child has had input into the changes in the home and their bedroom is the way they wish it to be. The child is relaxed and comfortable in their space.

Boundaries are consistent in the home. The child has made progress as a result. Staff and the placing authority work together to prepare the child for any changes in the boundaries, such as the end of a deprivation of liberty order.

The child is not in education, employment or training. Staff previously facilitated tutoring in the home and made complaints on the child's behalf to relevant agencies to get the child a suitable school place. This resulted in the child attending a suitable provision of secondary education. Staff make every effort to help the child explore possible avenues of education and employment.

Staff teach the child skills, such as cooking, cleaning and travelling independently. They have supported the child to apply for documents and accounts that the child will need as an adult. The child is developing skills for their adult life.

Staff promote a structured and healthy routine, which the child follows. They promote the child's hygiene and facilitate their medical appointments. Staff have provided the child with a gym pass and a home gym area. The child leads an active lifestyle and has a healthy diet.

The child sees the people that are important to them regularly, in line with their individual plan. Staff have positive relationships with the child's family. They transport the child long distances to ensure that the child maintains their relationships. Staff are flexible around the needs of the child and their family and will amend plans at short notice when required. The child is supported to maintain their identity.

Staff are creative in gathering the child's views. They amend processes to suit the preferences and needs of the child, such as by gathering views organically in day-to-day interactions rather than formal meetings. Staff ensure that child's views are used in planning for the home. They share the child's views in statutory meetings with other agencies so that they are part of decision-making about their care.

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

Staff know the risks to the child and how to manage them. Risk assessments and plans are clear and detailed. They are updated regularly and contain strategies for the staff to follow.

Staff teach the child about risk and the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. They re-visit conversations with the child when the child has not understood or processed the information. Staff have positive relationships and work collaboratively with specialist agencies, such as the police and youth justice services. The child has joined-up professional support to keep themselves safe.

Staff know the child's individual missing plan and follow it when the child is missing from home. The missing plan is current and detailed and considers the child's individual needs. The child is usually returned to the home swiftly. However, the missing plan does not have the details of one associate that would potentially allow staff to locate the child more quickly. On one occasion, there was a brief delay in staff starting the missing from home procedures. This was unaddressed by the manager.

Staff speak to the child when they return to try and understand the reasons for the missing episode. However, return home interviews conducted by the placing authority have not always occurred. Managers and leaders have challenged this and ensured that there is defined and effective process to ensure they are completed. The completion of return home interviews has increased as a result.

The child is rarely held by staff. Staff are trained to hold a child safely in the event this is necessary. When staff hold the child, this is proportionate to the risk and with minimum force. Staff speak to the child after the hold about their feelings and restorative work is undertaken between the child and staff. However, discussions with the child are not timely and not always undertaken by someone independent of the incident. Managers' discussions with staff are also delayed.

Staff manage behaviour through their relationships and reinforcement of positive behaviours. They regularly praise or reward the child when they are doing well. Consequences are rarely imposed by staff. When they are, they are fair and proportionate. The consequences are either directly linked to the behaviour or agreed between staff and the child. Managers have prompt oversight of consequences, however sometimes they fail to review their effectiveness. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that all behaviour management is effective.

Staff manage medication in the home well. Managers have implemented clear processes and ensure that all staff are aware of these. Medication is safely stored and administered.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The acting manager is registered at another home for the organisation. They knew the child well prior to undertaking the role. The manager is present in the home daily. They are supported by a competent and committed deputy manager who solely works at this home.

The managers spend an evening and sleep in the home weekly. This allows them to observe the operation of the home and interactions within it closely. It also promotes their strong relationships with the child and staff. The child has positive relationships with both the manager and deputy manager and seeks them out to talk and make jokes.

Staff feel that managers are available, supportive and responsive. The staff team is largely stable. There are no vacancies, and the managers do not use agency staff. The child builds secure relationships of trust with the adults that care for him.

Managers did not verify references provided for one new staff member. This means that the reasons for them leaving another position where they had been working with children or vulnerable adults was not checked.

Managers provide comprehensive training to staff. This training covers all areas of the child's needs, such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The managers identify where individual staff may benefit from further training in specific areas and provide this. Staff complete the training required of them and retain the learning. Staff are well prepared to meet the needs of the child they care for.

Team meetings are held regularly and are well-attended by staff. Within these, the deputy manager leads reflection on incidents and collaborative consideration of where practice could improve. Team meetings are also used as opportunities to bond and promote wellbeing. Staff feel more cohesive and valued as a result.

An independent person visits the home regularly. The managers ensure that staff are aware of the contents of the independent person's report and allocate the recommendations made to specific staff. This increases staff knowledge of the home's functioning and promotes accountability for their work.

The manager's review of the quality of care in the home is not completed in a timely way. The review lacks evaluation and specific actions to address shortfalls. This is a missed opportunity to identify issues and drive practice improvement.

Managers and leaders supervise staff regularly. Staff feel able to approach them with any concerns or challenges in between formal supervision. Managers provide staff with timely appraisals which consider the views of the child they care for.

## 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      |
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| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, that the registered person should verify, so far as reasonably practical, the reason why any employment or position involving work with children or vulnerable adults ended.</p> | 25 April 2025 |
| <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 25 April 2025 |

the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.

The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.

The registered person must ensure that—

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—

the name of the child;

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;

the date, time and location of the use of the measure;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

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(1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

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| <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and</p> <p>make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.</p> <p>(Regulation 45(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p> | <p>30 June 2025</p> |
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## **Recommendation**

- The registered person should specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from the home. Specifically, that the missing plan should contain details of all associates that could assist staff to locate the child more quickly, and that any delays in following the plan are addressed quickly by management ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)

## **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:** 2662751

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Holywell Children's Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Scott & Wilkinson, Dalton House, 9 Dalton Square,  
Lancaster LA1 1WD

**Responsible individual:** Jill Richards

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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