

# 2668747

Registered provider: Within Reach Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is managed by a private provider. The home provides care for three children with social and emotional needs. At the time of this inspection, two children and one young adult were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022, when this home was registered.

### Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2022

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
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| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | inadequate |
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** not previously inspected

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** not applicable

## Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

This is the first inspection of the home. Two children and one young adult were living at the home at the time of this inspection. The adult is appropriately living at this home beyond their 18th birthday to support a planned move to adult care.

The home is made up of three self-contained flats in one building, each with their own front door from the garden area. This type of accommodation supports children who struggle to live with others, with some being subject to court orders in relation to their welfare and safety. The quality of accommodation is generally suitable. Each flat is personalised; however, some areas require a general tidy up. The use of a large bolt and padlock on a loft hatch is unsightly and unnecessary.

Children report that they like having their own flat. Occasionally, they meet up in the garden. There was a positive interaction in the summer when a swimming pool was enjoyed in the grounds. Activities and interests are encouraged in the home and in the wider community. One child enjoys attending a performing arts club. This enables them to pursue their interest, develop skills and have opportunities to make friends.

Children are making progress from very difficult starting points. The number of incidents is decreasing, damage to the property has been reduced and children are forming positive relationships with the staff team. Stability has increased and, from this foundation, children are able to feel safe and therefore able to grow and develop. Despite some progress, children are not yet able to cope emotionally with formal education. The manager liaises closely with other professionals to identify the most appropriate alternative provision. In the absence of full-time education, children would benefit from more structured activities to assist with their learning.

Healthy diets and exercise are encouraged to promote physical well-being. Professional support is available for the children's emotional and mental health. Children have good dental hygiene. From initially refusing dental appointments, two children now attend and are supported to receive ongoing treatment.

The manager and staff team have developed positive relationships with family members. Children are spending quality time with the people important to them. For some, this is significant progress after previous breakdowns in their relationships.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

The manager attends regular meetings with a network of professionals who are involved in the care and protection of children. Social workers report very positively

about this home and describe the management as 'very responsive' and 'receptive'. A police officer described the staff team as 'the most proactive and responsive group of support workers' he has come across. Suitability checks are thorough for new and temporary staff, ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed.

This inspection identified that, overall, the practice to protect children is appropriate; however, the safeguarding records lack necessary detail to fully explain the actions taken. Generally, staff take action to respond to the immediate safeguarding risks. However, on occasions, this has meant calling the police to the home for assistance. On some occasions, calling the police was not necessary and could have been avoided.

One area of concern is that the manager and staff team have failed to act when a child has purchased vapes. Neither the child nor the vendor has been challenged. As a result, children are not being fully supported with a healthy lifestyle and the staff team is failing to enforce the law.

Children have been missing from the home. These events are reducing and, more recently, a child has returned to the home by themselves, without the police involvement. There are significant concerns when the child is missing. Staff remain curious and active to arrange the child's safe return. The inspectors saw one text message, sent by staff to encourage a child to return, that contained swearing. This inappropriate message had not been identified by the manager and, therefore, such poor practice had not been addressed. The responsible individual took immediate action to investigate once she became aware.

Staff help children to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Since living at this home, the number of incidents has reduced, and children are improving their levels of communication to reflect their emotional well-being. A behaviour support specialist has contributed to a care and support plan for one child. These documents include known risks and provide staff with clear guidance on how best to respond to children.

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

Leaders and managers fail to ensure that suitable records are maintained. Different recording systems in use restrict the ability of leaders and managers to apply effective scrutiny and challenge to records and care practices. Handwritten records are difficult to read and at times, and often incomplete. Inspectors struggled to access records to review.

The use of physical restraint is proportionate and used to prevent children harming themselves or others. Again, the records lack some details. In particular, there is no analysis after the manager's review.

The absence of comprehensive and effective monitoring results in leaders and managers not being fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of this home. This was evident in a review of the quality of care, as required by regulations. The report submitted to Ofsted includes consultation; however, it fails to include any analysis or conclusions.

Staff members are enthusiastic about their role in supporting and caring for children. They talk very positively about the manager and the support that they receive from her. A full complement of staff negates the need to use temporary staff, ensuring consistency of care is provided. One staff member reported that he has stayed with this organisation for two years because he appreciates the training and support. Another stated that they have been trained here more than any other job. They continued to say that 'the shift leaders and managers are amazing'.

All staff have completed mandatory training covering numerous topics. Given the concerns when children are missing, further training is required about child exploitation and the link to substance and alcohol misuse.

Leaders and managers respond quickly and diligently when poor staff practice comes to their attention. Allegation management is dealt with appropriately by reporting to the local authority designated officer and action is taken to safeguard children. Leaders and managers have failed to recognise that such referrals also need to be notified to Ofsted.

Leaders and managers are committed to addressing the failings identified from this inspection to improve the safety and care experiences for children.

## 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        |
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| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> | 5 October 2022  |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 31 October 2022 |

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| <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h))</p>                                                                                                      |                       |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> | <p>5 October 2022</p> |

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| <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                 |
| <p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 31 October 2022 |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child —</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p> | 5 October 2022  |



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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").<br/>(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3))</p> | <p>31 October 2022</p> |
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## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, in providing a nurturing and supportive environment to meet the needs of the children, the accommodation is homely and domestic. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that where children are not participating in full-time education because of their personal circumstances, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that electronic records can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view them and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

## **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:** 2668747

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

**Registered provider:** Within Reach Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Hazlewoods, Windsor House, Bayshill Road,  
Cheltenham GL50 3AT

**Responsible individual:** Tracey Caswell

**Registered manager:** Danielle White

## Inspectors

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector  
Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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