

2678053

Registered provider: Emerge Care and Therapeutic Solutions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. All three children shared their views.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024.

The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual, and Ofsted are currently checking that this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 23 April 2024

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
23/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/12/2023	Full	Good
13/12/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that they are happy at the home and feel safe. One child said that staff are nice and help them when they are upset. Another child said, 'It's great here, it's a great home, and the manager is amazing.' Children are observed to have trusted relationships with staff, who provide them with nurturing care.

Since the assurance inspection, one child has moved into the home and one child has moved out. Children's moves are well planned and include visits, where appropriate. Meeting children before they move allows them to ask any questions they may have, and helps to ensure children's experiences are positive.

Children receive individualised care. Staff involve children in the creation of their written plans. This helps children to make decisions and influence their care. Children's plans clearly capture the progress that children are making. Staff and managers understand what progress looks like for each child and progress is celebrated.

Staff prioritise education and all children attend education that meets their needs. A teacher described good collaborative working with staff from the home and commented on the positive impact that is having for the child. They said that the manager and staff are always available to them and described how this had helped to reduce the time a child spends out of school after an exclusion. A child who had no education in place now attends school and is sitting exams. Positive experiences of education help to improve children's opportunities.

Children live in a home that is warm and welcoming. Staff put photos of children on display around the home and high-quality soft furnishings contribute to a homely atmosphere. Children are supported to personalise their bedrooms and have a say in how their home is decorated and furnished. As a result, children feel a sense of belonging and feel valued in the home.

Staff support children to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff and managers recognise the importance of children's relationships with family and loved ones. A child's parent spoke positively about the care their child receives and said their child is settled and doing well.

Children are generally well supported to attend health appointments and staff understand children's health needs well. However, dental appointments have not taken place for one child for a long period of time, despite staff knowing that the child needs treatment. The manager and staff have not taken suitable action to explore the barriers to attendance and how the child could be best supported to attend. The manager has a plan to speak with the child about how they can support them and schedule an appointment.

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

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to keep children safe. Staff receive training on how to de-escalate incidents and children and staff are spoken with after incidents to explore their views. The manager completes evaluations and captures learning, which helps to ensure that strategies used to support children remain effective. Incidents of physical intervention reduce over time.

Staff follow clear plans and protocols when children go missing from their home. Plans are individualised and kept up to date with current information. Staff talk to children about the risks of going missing and welcome them back into the home when they return. These actions have a positive impact. Children who previously went missing regularly now no longer go missing, showing that staff's efforts are helping to reduce risk and improve safety.

Medication is managed well. The manager and staff complete regular audits, and the manager ensures that staff receive competency assessments before they administer and record medication independently. There have been no errors with medication.

Staff respond effectively to incidents of children harming themselves. The manager and staff work closely with other professionals to ensure that children's needs are well understood and that children receive the support that they need. Self-harm has substantially reduced for one child and another child described receiving nurturing care from staff after incidents.

Children and staff benefit from the support of a qualified and experienced therapeutic lead. The clinician provides the team with training and completes written assessments, which help to inform children's care. Children can access therapy within the home when it is appropriate to their needs.

Recording and reporting is an ongoing area for development. There are inconsistencies between some plans and the manager has not always ensured that all learning is recorded after incidents. This is a recording issue and there has not been an impact on practice.

Complaints and allegations are taken seriously by leaders and managers, who complete comprehensive investigations. The manager ensures that children have opportunities to speak to their social workers when they have concerns. The manager writes outcome letters to children after formal complaints that explain the action that has been taken. However, the manager has not always provided children with an outcome when they have made an allegation about a staff member. The manager reflected on this shortfall during the inspection and has a clear plan to ensure that children are always informed of outcomes when they raise concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is passionate about achieving positive outcomes for children and children recognise the positive impact she has on their lives. Children, staff and professionals are unanimous in their praise of the manager and describe her as dedicated and committed.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the home. There are effective systems for monitoring the quality of care including regular audits. The manager creates clear action plans that help to drive development and ensure that the service is continually improving.

Staff benefit from regular supervision meetings and say that they feel well supported. Staff describe the manager as being approachable and feel there is no question that they cannot ask. Staff nominated the manager for an 'inspirational manager of the year' award, which she won. Her success was celebrated by the RI and children were proud to share the manager's achievement. This reflects the positive relationships the manager fosters with the team and children, who hold her in high regard.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive range of training, including training that is individualised to children's needs. Staff say that training helps to prepare them for their roles. Children benefit from the support of staff who understand their roles and responsibilities well.

There is an experienced senior leadership team that has good oversight of the home. The manager says she feels well supported in her role. Senior leaders have recognised the manager's commitment and successes, and she is now mentoring other managers in the organisation. This helps to ensure that good practice is shared.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. that each child is registered as a patient with a general medical practitioner and a registered dental practitioner; and that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))(b)(c))	31 July 2025

In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's plans are up to date with children's registered dental practitioner, appointments are scheduled, and children are supported and encouraged to attend.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. This includes ensuring that the manager's evaluations after incidents capture all learning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to share any concerns about their care or other matters as soon as they arise. Children must be able to take up issues or make a complaint with support and without any fear that this will result in any adverse consequences. Children should receive outcomes to concerns that they raise. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)

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: 2678053

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Emerge Care and Therapeutic Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: The Office, 5 Rockside, Stoke on Trent ST7 4PG

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Samantha Williams

Inspector

Laura Norcop, Social Care Inspector

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