

2684680

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to two children who may have learning disabilities and/or experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 14 August 2024.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 November 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: 20 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/09/2023	Full	Good
20/03/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last full inspection, one child has moved in, and one child has moved out. The registered manager has completed a good assessment using information known from the child's placing authority. The child's risks and vulnerabilities are well triangulated through their care planning documents, with clear staff strategies and individualised targets and incentives to promote life skills and positive behaviours. This approach is having positive outcomes for both children living in the home.

Staff have built trusting relationships with children. Staff know the children well, and they listen to them and spend quality time with them. This has helped one child develop an appropriate sense of permanency and belonging.

Children's care planning documents are responsive and reflective of the children's presenting needs. Children are making progress relevant to their experiences, needs and time spent in the home. Staff identify key targets in children's education and health plans to promote a multi-agency approach and secure targets for children. These targets filter into daily plans for children so they have every opportunity to work towards and achieve their goals. Staff encourage target progression sensitively and at a pace suitable to children.

Staff support children to enjoy safe and meaningful time with their families. Staff work in partnership with parents and allocated social workers to ensure that family time is positive and in the interests of children. This collaborative work promotes living in the home and home-life stability for children.

Staff encourage children to attend their educational provisions daily. For both children, progress is noted in their attendance and participation. An educational professional said, 'The registered manager and her team place attendance as a top priority, and we have two children who have a better attendance at school than they have ever had in their history.'

Staff regularly take photos of the children. These photos show children enjoying new experiences and participating in meaningful activities. Staff artistically create monthly newsletters to share children's experiences with their professional network and their families. This visually reminds children of the fun things they do and what makes them happy.

Staff understand children's daily routines and use informed assessments to provide daily structure and activities for children. This is helping children to stay focused and organised throughout their day. The registered manager has also used these assessments to inform the children's home environment, such as including tactile sensory boards and coloured mirrors. This is helping one child develop their communication, socialisation and self-regulation.

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

Children have risk assessments to identify their individual support needs. The strategies used by staff to support children in managing risks are clear, and they are reviewed regularly. Known risks are triangulated throughout children's planning documents, and staff actively talk to children about their behaviours. This is helping children to assess risks and reflect on their behaviours with appropriate levels of support.

There are clear and consistent boundaries for staff to follow in the children's day-to-day plans. These are reviewed and agreed on in team meetings, professional discussions and in consultation with children. Highlighted text in these plans helps important information to stand out, directing staff to new strategies resulting from regular reviews and reflections.

One member of staff raised concerns immediately to a manager after they had received information regarding staff practice concerns. Managers appropriately escalated this to safeguarding professionals and took reasonable measures to reduce risks to children. These concerns are under investigation by the head of care, who is liaising effectively with external safeguarding professionals. Immediate action has been taken to refresh staff safeguarding training and other identified outcomes, which the head of care plans to embed back into practice. This approach promotes a positive learning culture.

In an isolated incident, staff did not follow one child's risk assessment. They encouraged a walk in the woods, despite one child displaying unsafe behaviours in the home and vehicle before the outing. During this outing, staff lost sight of the child. Staff did not follow the child's missing-from-care protocol, delaying the police being notified. The registered manager has reviewed this incident; however, they have not identified these shortfalls in staff practice. This is a missed opportunity to reflect on any necessary learning outcomes. There have been no further incidents of children going missing from the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last full inspection, the home manager has been registered with Ofsted and a new head of care has been employed. The registered manager is working towards her level 5 diploma and understands the regulatory timeframes for completion. The registered manager says she feels very well supported by the new head of care.

Staff supervisions are timely, reflective and aid their professional development. Staff say they feel well supported by their line managers and can speak to them outside of their arranged supervisions. The systematic approach of asking safeguarding questions in staff supervision installs confidence that staff understand their responsibilities, and it gives line managers the opportunity to address any gaps in knowledge immediately.

The registered manager is a qualified therapeutic practitioner in the provider's model of care. Staff also receive this training and can confidently apply this to their practice. Staff and the therapy team work collaboratively, and if any behaviour or challenges arise that need more targeted work, the registered manager is quick to draw on others' expertise and services. This means children are making steady and good progress with their therapeutic goals and targets.

The registered manager has recently started auditing safer recruitment files for staff. Previously, this has been the responsibility of the organisation's HR department and, on occasion, the responsible individual. In two records sampled for newly recruited staff, they had been employed with only one professional reference. This means not all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that staff are safely recruited. The registered manager plans on creating clear monitoring systems for all staff recruitment files.

Senior leaders are actively recruiting staff and a deputy manager to join the home. In the interim, the registered manager is using agency staff to fill recruitment gaps. Agency staff spoken to during the inspection had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and confidently spoke about their induction into the home. However, not all records demonstrate that agency staff have received their inductions or that managers hold the relevant and necessary information on individual workers. This omission has not impacted on the quality of care children receive but has the potential to do so.

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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all significant incidents are evaluated with scrutiny, taking into consideration any possible learning outcomes that can be implemented in children's risk management plans, or to support the development of staff. This is a repeat requirement.	1 February 2025
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or 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,	1 February 2025

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

The requirements are that—

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.
(Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))

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: 2684680

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 30-34 North Street, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 1DW

Responsible individual: Scott Fasciolo-Barnes

Registered manager: Gael Barkworth

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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