

2685998

Registered provider: Guidance Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to two children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 August 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: 28 November 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
28/11/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making positive progress from their starting points. They have trusting and secure relationships with staff, who know them well and prioritise their well-being. Staff treat children with dignity and respect and speak fondly and positively about them.

One child has recently sat some functional skills exams and aspires to start an apprenticeship in landscape gardening. This is after successfully engaging in some work experience.

There are some difficulties with one child's attendance and engagement at school. The manager and staff attend meetings with the virtual school to help to address these issues. However, the agreed outcome of these meetings has been delayed. The manager has not challenged this with the placing authority to ensure that the child's educational needs are met.

Staff support children's time with family in line with agreed plans. Staff have developed positive relationships with family members. They work together to make sure that time with family is supported and encouraged despite this taking place a long distance from the home. This makes sure that children can maintain relationships which are important to them.

Children are offered opportunities to take part in activities such as going to the cinema, driving range, off-road motorcycle park and on holidays abroad. Staff also support children's friendships. They support children to spend time with their friends and help them to understand what positive and healthy relationships look and feel like.

Children's health needs are met. They are supported to attend routine health appointments and seek specialist health input when needed.

The manager and staff maintain the home to a good standard. It is warm and welcoming and is a pleasant place for children to live. During the inspection, one child's bedroom was being decorated and there are plans for the downstairs of the home to be repainted in a new colour.

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

There have been no safeguarding concerns or allegations since the last inspection. However, staff are suitably trained in safeguarding and can explain the correct processes to follow should a concern arise.

Children are helped and supported to manage their behaviour and feelings safely. Staff understand children's experiences, respond with appropriate boundaries about what is safe and acceptable for each child and seek to understand the triggers for behaviour.

Incidents in the home are rare. There have been no occasions when restraint has been needed. Incidents and significant events are recorded appropriately and include all necessary detail and information. Staff respond appropriately to children's needs, ensuring that they receive the support they require.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When children have been away from the home without permission or have not returned to the home at the agreed time, staff have taken suitable action to locate and return them as quickly as possible.

Children's plans and risk assessments are detailed documents which provide clear information and guidance for staff. Children's individual risks are detailed in their plans. These are detailed documents and are frequently updated.

Direct-work sessions take place frequently. They cover relevant topics and are also carried out reactively following any significant events. However, there is a missed opportunity to revisit known risks around cannabis and to educate children on how to keep themselves safe and identify risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced manager who knows the children well and understands their individual needs. The registered manager has been absent for some time throughout this inspection period; however, she has now returned to her role. There were clear plans in place for the management oversight of the home in her absence. Despite this management oversight, some staff failed to demonstrate a clear understanding around their roles and responsibilities to lead in the manager's absence.

The manager has suitable arrangements in place to ensure that she has an overview of the home and can identify the home's strengths and address any shortfalls or areas for improvement. However, the quality of care review is not evaluative and does not include children's feedback and opinions or an action plan to improve or maintain the quality of care provided.

There is a consistent and stable workforce. On some occasions, staff from other homes in the company have worked at the home. When this has happened, they have worked alongside members of the core team to ensure that the children are supported by staff they know.

Staff have completed training in most subjects that are relevant to the children's needs. However, staff have not received training on issues such as drugs misuse, and not all staff have received training on topics such as bereavement or trauma and attachment.

Supervision sessions take place regularly; however, they do not always focus on staff practice. In addition, not all staff have had their performance appraised in the last year.

Staff attend regular team meetings. These are an opportunity for the team to share information and updates about the children and to discuss any concerns or issues which may arise.

When complaints have been raised by local residents, the manager has suitably investigated their concerns and provided an appropriate response to the person complaining in line with the company's complaints policy.

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; 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— understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iv)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff help the children to understand how to keep themselves safe, particularly around the use of cannabis and non-prescribed diet pills. They should seek external professional support to achieve this where necessary.	26 September 2024
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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))	26 September 2024

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff are trained to understand children's individual needs.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	26 September 2024
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. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. 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"). The registered person must— 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 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.	26 September 2024

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities and the expectations of their role in the manager's absence. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered person should ensure that where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home, the provider challenges them to meet the child's needs (see regulations 5(c)). Staff should act as champions for children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would. Staff should act as effective advocates for or on behalf of a child who may be experiencing difficulties with educational attainment, attendance or behaviour. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8 and page 28, paragraph 5.12)

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: 2685998

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Guidance Care

Registered provider address: Unit 8 Sovereign Court, Wyrefields, Poulton-le-Flyde, Lancashire FY6 8JX

Responsible individual: Clare O'Connor

Registered manager: Nicola Reason

Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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