

2690173

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 owned by a private company. The home is registered to care for up to 5 children with autism, learning difficulties, communication needs and/or social and emotional difficulties. There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 14 November 2024 and is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2026

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: 22 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2025	Full	Good
14/08/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in the home are cared for by a staff team that are passionate about the work they do. Staff provide the children with experiences to promote building independence but also to ensure that they are having fun. Children are supported to attend theme parks, go swimming and go on trips to the zoo and holidays.

Children's relationships with their families are promoted, where it is safe to do so. Families are welcomed into the home to spend time with children and staff also support children to see their families in the family home. Providing flexibility allows children to spend the best possible quality time with family members.

All the children attend the on-site school full time and enjoy going to school. There is close joint working between the staff in the home and school, with some staff members attending school with the children to support them. The children are also supported to build on their learning and skills by completing additional learning in the home.

Children are encouraged to provide their views. Communication aids are well used and are embedded into daily routines. Children choose what activities they want to do, the food that they want to eat and the decoration of their bedrooms.

When children move into or out of the home, their transitions are carefully considered alongside a multi-agency group. Plans are clear and staff work effectively to ensure that children have positive outcomes. Children's needs, wishes and feelings are held as a priority. However, when children remain living in the home after their 18th birthday, risk assessments are not always completed to ensure that their needs as an adult, or any associated risks, are overtly considered.

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

Staff response to incidents within the home is excellent. They manage behaviours that challenge well and utilise opportunities for reflection with the children, using communication aids to engage the children in discussions about the incident and how they are feeling.

Staff work well together to meet the needs of the children. They are established as a team and can quickly and effectively respond to keep both the children and themselves safe. Handovers are informative and all staff contribute to ensuring that the day ahead is well planned. Staff ensure high levels of supervision and support and children do not go missing from the home.

Management oversight of incidents is good. When necessary, investigations are completed by senior leaders and the manager and appropriate action is taken to address any concerns.

Staff understand risks well and respond appropriately. However, the recording within children's case files lacks detail, reflection and analysis at times. Consequently, some records are not fully up to date and do not reflect the detail of what happened and the positive impact that staff responses to children are having.

Staff use of restraint with children is proportionate. Staff are trained and supported by in-house trainers, which allows for effective support to be given and training to be provided whenever needed. However, some records that show the debrief with staff following a restraint are not detailed and do not always show the support offered for each member of staff involved.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and deputy manager have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They work well together to ensure a consistent approach. They are ambitious and aspirational for the children and are clear about the steps needed to drive improvement.

Staff feel supported in their roles, and this has resulted in good staff retention. Having a permanent and stable staff team has resulted in care for the children that is consistent and predictable, meaning that children are settled and happy.

The managers are respected by the professionals that work with them. Professionals praise the effective and meaningful communication. The manager challenges other professionals, when needed, to ensure that the needs of the children are met and that children's rights are promoted.

Management oversight is evident throughout records and the manager is building new systems that are starting to embed. However, some policies require updating to reflect the practice within the home, especially with regard to the use of internal door locks and the process for staff debriefs following incidents.

Staff are provided with supervision. However, newer members of staff are not consistently provided with more frequent supervision as outlined within the home's policy. The supervision model is not consistently used, and staff are not always held to account when actions are set.

Staff are offered a wealth of training opportunities covering a range of subjects. However, staff do not always prioritise training or undertake courses in a timely way. Although the impact on children is limited, these delays are not always adequately addressed by managers.

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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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 (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that the necessary risk assessments are in place when a child turns 18 years old and continues to reside in the home.	30 April 2026
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))	30 April 2026
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—	30 April 2026

include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(x))	30 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person has specific responsibilities under regulation 34 to prepare and implement policies. All policies should be reviewed regularly and revised where appropriate. In particular, the manager should ensure that policies regarding internal use of door locks and details regarding when and how staff debriefing sessions are completed are reflective of current practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.19)

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: 2690173

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Scott Fasciolo-Barnes

Registered manager: Emma Austin

Inspector

Faye McCarthy, social care inspector

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