

2701539

Registered provider: Heartwood RSS Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to 4 children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted on 19 December 2022. The manager has applied to be registered.

One child was living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 January 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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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	requires improvement to be good
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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: 22 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/07/2024	Full	Good
18/04/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's progress is impacted by shortfalls in leadership and management and how children are helped and protected.

Staff consult children about their care and other aspects of the home. This is not recorded in a meaningful way, which devalues the children's contribution. In addition, some consequences appear punitive rather than being used as an opportunity for children to reflect and learn about different ways to behave. This does not support children to be reflective about themselves or to learn to be restorative.

Since the last inspection, there has been some turmoil in the staffing of the home. This has hindered the reliability of relationships for children and reduced the capacity of staff to support children to reduce risks they are vulnerable to. Staff complete daily records, and the manager is beginning to support staff to use these to identify and reflect on children's patterns of behaviour. The reducing changes in staffing and the reflection on children's behaviour are beginning to help staff to better understand how to support children.

As staff have developed their understanding of children's holistic needs, children are now better involved in creating their care plans. As a result, children are actively involved in identifying the support they need to make progress.

Children have opportunities to have fun, and they enjoy activities. Staff take the time to talk with children to understand what they enjoy doing. This helps staff to tailor children's experiences to their interests. Despite this, children's activities are not always well captured in records, so they do not have a complete record of their time in the home.

Children live in a safe, warm and homely environment. The atmosphere in the home feels relaxed, and staff make sure that it is well maintained. Children are supported to personalise their bedrooms.

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

When children go missing from the care of staff, staff manage this well. Staff complete detailed chronologies when children go missing so learning can be identified, and they have accurate records to share with other agencies as needed. They also complete risk assessments to consider how risks can be mitigated. Despite these measures, staff actions have not led to meaningful reductions in episodes when children are missing from the care of staff, and the risk of harm to those children is increased.

Children have bespoke behaviour support plans, which help staff to recognise and respond to children's emotional triggers. However, the recent changes in the staff team have led to inconsistent practice and have negatively impacted on the effectiveness of staff support.

Staff do not yet fully understand all risks and how to manage them. The manager has begun to use reflective learning exercises with staff to develop their understanding of risk. This is not yet embedded into practice, and the hoped-for impact has not yet been realised.

Children are supported to be healthy. Children are registered with universal health services, and staff make sure that children receive their prescribed medication as directed by health professionals.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection, there have been changes in the management in the home. These have caused instability in the leadership of the home. There has also been some instability in staff rotas. This has restricted leaders' ability to build a stable staff team that can deliver consistent care to children.

Monitoring and oversight of most areas of the home have been inconsistent. Leaders and managers have created plans to address this, but this does not detract from a prolonged period when managers have not addressed areas for development effectively. This has meant that care has not improved as leaders would have wanted.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that staff fully understand the home's statement of purpose or that care is provided in line with this statement. This has added to the inconsistent approach staff have used in their work, and it has also impacted on the quality of care that children have received.

Leaders and the manager have put in place regular team meetings to support staff and help improve their shared understanding of care practice. These meetings support staff to discuss the needs of children and have begun to include reflective learning. However, this is a new initiative and is not yet embedded to help staff better understand how to support children to make progress. Leaders and the manager were accepting of the shortfalls found at the inspection and are committed to improving the quality of care children receive.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff understand the home's statement of purpose so that they are able to deliver care in line with the ethos, aims and objectives outlined in the statement.	20 February 2026
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and	20 February 2026

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that there is a stable staff team in place to build positive relationships with children. In addition, staff must ensure that they are able to identify risks to children and take action to reduce these risks, leading to meaningful change. For example, this includes reducing the frequency of children missing from the care of staff and working effectively with children so they can develop an understanding of how to help keep themselves safe.	
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 the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they continually monitor the work in the home so they understand children's progress and develop staff practice to support progress as needed. The registered person must also ensure that the home is delivering the home's aims and objectives and that there is a stable workforce to provide consistent, well-informed care to children.	20 February 2026

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: 2701539

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Heartwood RSS Limited

Registered provider address: 416 Green Lane, Ilford, Essex IG3 9JX

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Helen Daniel, Social Care Inspector

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