

2709854

Registered provider: Changing Lives Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 21 February 2023.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 August 2023

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the home opened in March 2023, three children have moved into the home and two children have moved out. There is currently one child living in the home.

When the placing of children has not been successful, leaders and managers reflect and learn from those experiences. Changes made to the process have led to positive, child-focused improvements for new children moving in. As a result, the child who has recently moved into the home has had a positive experience and has settled and made progress.

Committed staff encourage the child to actively contribute to their care planning. Staff use activities and direct work to give the child plenty of opportunities to share their views and feelings. This helps to ensure that the child's social, emotional and health needs are met effectively.

For the children who have lived in the home since it first registered, their individualities have been respected and celebrated. For one child, this meant that they were supported to explore their identity and develop their self-esteem through experimenting with their clothes and hair. This helped them to feel accepted and settled in the home, which gives the child a sense of security.

Relationships between the child and staff are caring and nurturing. The child experiences exciting, new and enjoyable activities, such as day trips to the seaside, football training and ice skating. The child's progress is captured through photos and positive commentary in colourful and creative 'Happy Books'. This helps the child to reflect on their time at the home and build their life story.

Staff are ambitious for the child's progress and promote education well. When children have had no school place or access to education on a part-time basis only, staff actively work with education professionals to develop plans to support learning. The registered manager works tirelessly to provide a remote learning package with a child's school. This includes a clear plan for a return to full-time education as soon as possible.

The child is supported to take responsibility and ownership for their belongings and to develop independence skills. For instance, they earn reward points for keeping their room tidy. This will help them to achieve their goal of buying their own musical instrument and having music lessons to learn how to play it.

Staff work proactively and positively with families to promote meaningful and safe visits to family. Parents said that communication with managers and staff is good and that when children face difficulties settling in, staff work well to resolve these issues.

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

Leaders and managers have strong relationships with social workers and the police. Staff know the child well and are knowledgeable about their individual risks and the measures in place to minimise these. When the child has concerns, they can identify a trusted adult to talk to.

When safeguarding incidents occur, staff follow well-planned procedures and contact relevant agencies to keep children safe. Management overview of incidents is thorough, and reviews of safety plans are timely.

There are clear plans in place to protect children who go missing. Staff provide well-coordinated responses. When these are not effective, the registered manager works closely with social care professionals and the police to review and update procedures if required. The registered manager has developed a link with a local police officer, who visits the child to talk about keeping themselves safe inside of the home and out in the community.

When children behave in a way that may cause harm or serious damage, staff are quick to intervene. Staff use holds for the shortest time and only when necessary to keep children safe. Management oversight is detailed and includes discussions with the staff involved. Children are offered the opportunity to discuss incidents and explore different ways to manage their feelings. New information relating to triggers of specific behaviours, or the effectiveness of strategies used, is incorporated into care plan updates.

Children's bedroom doors are fitted with door alarms. These are used in accordance with children's individual needs and plans and only if required. This means that children have additional safeguards in place should they be needed, and their independence and dignity are not compromised.

Staff understand the risks to children online. When staff have concerns about a child's safety, prompt and effective action is taken to keep them safe. This includes one-to-one sessions with the child and improved parental restrictions on devices. There are additional measures in place to ensure that access to social media or online gaming is age-appropriate for the child.

Health and safety monitoring systems and audits are overseen by leaders and managers and help to minimise risks and keep the child safe in the home.

The registered manager ensures that individuals working at the home go through a rigorous selection procedure and that their suitability is carefully checked. They make sure that prospective staff have the right personal qualities, enthusiasm, experience, skills and values to work with vulnerable children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has a detailed knowledge of the home and the needs of the children who have lived there. Staff are confident in her decision-making and feel inspired by her progression.

Despite some difficult times for the team this year, staff morale is high. Staff said that they feel well supported by the registered manager, both in their work and with their emotional well-being. One new member of staff said that they love their job and described the manager as 'great' and 'so supportive'.

All staff are competent in their roles. They access training in core areas, including safeguarding children, physical intervention and first aid. Staff undertake more-targeted training, including managing self-harm, mental health awareness and child sexual exploitation. This training ensures that the staff have the skills they need to meet the individual needs of the children they care for.

Staff participate in regular team meetings to reflect on children's progress, share important information about children's plans and to discuss the running of the home. The staff's contribution is an important feature of making sure that they understand their roles, support children consistently and work as a cohesive and effective team.

There are effective internal and external monitoring systems in place. The registered manager is well organised and has developed her own internal quality assurance systems. This means that she has a good understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas that need further development. However, the workforce development plan does not include timescales for staff induction, staff training and how staff performance is managed.

External professionals say that the home is well managed and that staff have a great understanding of children's individual needs. Children's views are listened to, and these are reflected in their plans. One social worker said that he would have no hesitation in placing children at the home in the future.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children have a positive experience moving into and on from the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which reflects the timescales for staff induction and core training and that details how poor performance of staff will be managed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: 2709854

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Changing Lives Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: Office 7, 35 to 37 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7JN

Responsible individual: Michelle Clarke

Registered manager: Ruth Gorin

Inspectors

Tony Waite, Social Care Inspector

Mike Simmonds, Social Care Inspector

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