

2715700

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is managed by a charity working in partnership with a local authority.

A suitably experienced manager is registered with Ofsted.

Three children lived at the home at the time of inspection.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 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: 8 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The building is a well-presented and maintained home. It is spacious and decorated to a high standard. It feels like a family home. There were three children living in the home at the time of this inspection. A suitably experienced and qualified manager is in post and is registered with Ofsted.

One child had recently arrived to live in the home. The child experienced a positive move. The child has been supported to settle in quickly by staff. Other children have had longer placements. One child has moved into a more independent provision, and this was positive. The home offered support after the child moved out. The admission of children has not always been effective. One child's experience of living in the home was poor, which also affected another child.

Children have been supported to make good progress since moving to the home. Two children were impacting each other through negative behaviours. The staff have persevered in supporting the children to live together more positively. Staff reinforce positive behaviour and use appropriate consequences. This is teaching children alternatives to learned behaviours shaped by past experiences.

Children are all making progress with their education. Children had missed significant time in education before moving to the home. Staff have helped children build confidence with learning. Tutors have been provided in the home. Children have been supported to attend alternative provisions that better meet their needs. Children now enjoy attending and their achievements are celebrated. One child has support from a mentor every week. This has improved their confidence and broadened their experiences.

Children are generally in good health but do use vapes. There has been a more open approach to supporting this by the new manager. Children respect the home's rules and as a result there is less negative behaviour related to vaping. Children are reducing their use and telling staff they want to stop. Children are supported to eat healthily and receive help to cook and prepare meals themselves.

Children are supported to spend time with their families. The staff have built positive and professional relationships with family members. Staff support family time in line with the children's care plans. The organisation provides additional clinical support to children and their families. This is helping children to repair relationships safely and slowly with family. One parent said: 'My relationship with [the child's name] is improving. We both find this really helpful'.

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

Children all said that they feel safe living in the home. The staff recognise that children may be more distressed when they first move to a new home. Staff have built safe and trusting relationships with the children. Children trust staff to support them emotionally.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks. These are understood by staff and outlined in tailored safety plans. Incidents in the home have significantly reduced. The use of restraint has been minimal and is always a last resort. The manager leads a culture based on a therapeutic model of communication and playfulness.

Children know how to complain. When they do so, support is received from the staff and manager. Children felt that they could raise concerns because they felt safe to do so.

Children in the home do go missing. The frequency of missing incidents has reduced significantly. The reasons for children going missing are identified by the staff. The staff adjust plans to reflect the children's needs. This leads to fewer incidents because children's needs are better understood. Staff follow missing safety plans effectively. A police officer said: 'The home is one of the best we have seen at disruption and reduction of missing episodes.'

Risk assessments for children contain relevant information. The plans are not easy to follow, and different risks are not separated. This means it is difficult to follow the plan to keep children safe from certain risks. Child exploitation safety plans do not contain all the actions that staff should follow. Some information gathered from missing incidents has not been added to plans. This may impact how staff safeguard children from being exploited. Staff have not received adequate training in child exploitation.

Safe recruitment of staff is practised. However, required information was missing for one staff member. The manager did not assure themselves that a worker independent from the staff team was safely recruited. This shortfall has not directly impacted children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An experienced and qualified manager leads the team. They are supported by a suitably experienced deputy. The manager is registered and has been in post for a relatively short time. The members of the leadership team are improving the skills and experience of the staff. The staff team is still developing. Leadership of the home since the last inspection has been inconsistent. This is no longer the case and children are responding to the current staff team stability. The manager has high aspirations for children.

All professionals said that the managers are driving positive change in the home. They said that children are settled because of the improvements in the team. When staff practice has been below expectations managers have taken appropriate action.

Professionals report that managers are available and transparent when working through issues. They are creating an open culture of improvement.

Staff feel supported by managers and each other. Staff receive regular supervision that is structured and well planned. There is added support to the staff through a clinical supervisor. This is available both as a group and individually. Managers also have access to the sessions. This is having a positive influence on the team's development. The needs of the children are evaluated within these consultations, which are also available to external professionals. This creates a 'team around the child' approach to care.

Staff have received the necessary training to fulfil their roles. Staff receive a positive induction. Following probation, they are enrolled on the relevant course to become qualified. The opportunity to prioritise training specific to children's individual needs is sometimes missed. The manager is good at reviewing and reflecting. Their comments and responses are evident on documents. Systems for record-keeping in the home are not helping the managers to have good oversight in some areas. For example, the manager did not have access to key documents on employees' files.

The home's statement of purpose does not reflect the current registration conditions of the home. It does not accurately identify the number of children it can accommodate. It does not reflect the current staffing structure of the home nor the recent change of responsible individual.

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 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(e)) This specifically relates to risk assessments being clear around the risk of exploitation and that staff have received appropriate training. Also, that missing-from-home protocols reflect new information and learning that can help safeguard children.	4 September 2024
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	4 October 2024

that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	
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, 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)) This specifically relates to a full employment history being provided and gaps explored. Also, that the registered person has satisfied themselves of the safe recruitment of mentors for children.	5 August 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that records may be kept electronically (regulation 38) provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

This specifically relates to the home's systems of recording being suitable for managers to be able to monitor and review.

- The registered person is required to develop and keep under review a statement of purpose (regulation 16 and schedule 1). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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: 2715700

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Registered provider address: Barnardo House, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Michelle Hill

Registered manager: Caroline Holland

Inspector

Chris Haines, Social Care Inspector

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