

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.

The experienced manager is registered and has the relevant qualification.

The home cares for two children who cannot live at home at this time.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 August 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff prepared for the children moving into the home, seeking information about their needs, preferences, risks and behaviours. Staff are skilled at building positive relationships and supporting the children to settle. They provide nurturing care and consistent boundaries.

Two children with complex needs, histories and vulnerabilities have been living at the home since it opened in May 2023. They have experienced a stable staff group, supported by each child's network of family and professionals.

The children have made limited education progress due to delays and difficulties in attaining suitable education arrangements. Managers have escalated delays with the responsible virtual school and the placing local authority.

One child has not responded well to a home tutor who has been commissioned. This is due to the child's previous education experiences and current needs. Staff and the virtual school are continuing to support and promote the child's engagement with education. Staff have supported the child to consider college courses and applications to colleges.

Managers did not ensure timely alternative education arrangements for the second child who moved into the home. This was a missed opportunity, as this child was motivated to learn and make progress.

The children attend appointments with health services and are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles. This would be strengthened by implementing a coherent, consistent plan to support one child to stop smoking and/or using electronic cigarettes. The children have been referred to specialist services, such as the child and adolescent mental health services.

Staff proactively support the children to maintain relationships that are important to them. They have helped one child repair a relationship with a family member.

One child, used to caring for pets at home, was supported to choose a pet for their birthday, to help them to settle. The children are consulted about their daily living arrangements and their care plans. Staff celebrate all of the children's achievements and small signs of change and progress.

The children have made progress in developing independence skills. They are encouraged to care for their rooms and to plan and cook meals. Staff are supporting the children to explore voluntary work experience in the local area. One parent said, 'I feel the staff understand my child and they are doing an amazing job.'

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

The children have individual risk assessments and positive behaviour plans. These include known information about the children, and information about their emerging needs and risks.

There is a qualified child psychotherapist who provides the staff team with consultation, particularly about approaches to supporting the children to feel safe. This advice, together with the children's individual plans, helps staff to build positive relationships with the children, enhances their understanding of the children's complex needs and supports safe care.

One child has reduced risks in some behaviours but has a high level of episodes of going missing from home. Staff adhere to the missing-from-home procedures. They work closely with local police and with the child's family to find out as much information as possible to prevent the child from going missing. The child has often made the decision themselves to return to the home and has cooperated with agencies supporting their return. Strategies have been developed and agreed with the local authority to try to prevent episodes of the child going missing from the home, which they have recently reduced.

There have been multi-agency strategy discussions and some consideration of whether one child should move placement to keep them safe. Currently, the child's care plan has not changed. Managers and staff have persevered in trying to reduce risks and provide opportunities for the child to maintain relationships with family members. This means the child has experienced some stability, and staff have continued to develop positive relationships with the child.

Senior managers escalate concerns to the local authority and also seek assistance from the police. Managers have also escalated concerns with the placing authority of a child not living at this home.

One child has emotional well-being and mental health needs. There have been some incidents of self-harm behaviours. Staff have sought advice and treatment for the child. Staff carefully monitor the child's mood and behaviours. They consult with the therapist and the child and adolescent mental health services to support the child to reduce risks.

Ofsted has been notified about two referrals to the local authority designated officer. One is being progressed subject to internal disciplinary processes, and one is subject to multi-agency child protection procedures. There are no risks to the children who are currently living at the home.

Managers have not notified Ofsted about some incidents involving the police being called to the home, or about persistent episodes of a child going missing from the home. There has been limited impact for children, as safeguarding procedures have been followed. However, managers are not meeting their regulatory responsibilities,

and Ofsted does not have an up-to-date, accurate picture of safeguarding concerns at the home.

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

This is a new home. Children have lived at the home since May 2023. The staff trained and prepared together for several months prior to the children moving in. Staff have received training in attachment and trauma-informed practice to support the delivery of care, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

Managers recognise that recording and monitoring systems require further development. They are in the process of commissioning new software to improve systems.

Some records are not child-friendly and are not being used effectively in work with the children. Records do not include sufficient evaluation to inform an accurate assessment of progress.

Staff receive support, including supervision meetings with their manager and team meetings. Records and actions are brief and do not evidence that leaders are supporting the review and development of practice at the home effectively.

The home's own independent visitor's reports have made some recommendations about shortfalls in children's records, which have been actioned.

Managers have escalated concerns with senior managers in the placing local authority when there have been delays in children's planning meetings and in receiving essential children's records.

Managers have recommended a review of lessons learned about information-sharing with the placing local authority to improve monitoring of the quality of care at the home and to support the children's progress.

There has been very positive feedback from all professionals and family members about staff's care of the children and about partnership working. One social worker said that the manager has been excellent to work with, providing prompt information. They also commented that staff are meeting the child's complex emotional needs and that they have helped the child to spend time with their family.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8(1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))	30 September 2023
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— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each	30 September 2023

child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious and there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	30 September 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to help children understand and, where necessary, change negative behaviours in key areas of health. This is in relation to staff ensuring there is a plan in place to support a child to stop smoking and/or using vapes. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35 paragraph 7.18).

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 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: Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Michelle Hill

Registered manager: Sean Fagan

Inspectors

Cathey Moriarty, Social Care Inspector

Kay Challand, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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