

2730126

Registered provider: Highlands Care Solutions

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation, and it is the organisation's only children's home. The home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 August 2025

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: 4 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2024	Full	Good
06/03/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children acknowledge the positive relationships that they have with the staff at the home. Staff understand the importance of building relationships with the children and how these impact on the progress that children make.

Staff are well trained to support the children in their care. Alongside the organisation's mandatory training, the manager is constantly looking for ways to develop the skills of the staff team. Staff have undertaken a therapeutic parenting course delivered by a psychologist and they have also received additional training from external mental health professionals. As a result, staff have a better understanding of children's trauma and the impact on their behaviour. Children's families are positive about the care that their children receive.

Children have made progress with their education. One child's attendance has increased at school and one child is now able to travel to and from school independently. One child has engaged well with a tutor and with the in-house education that has been supplied in the absence of formal education provision. The child understands how their education plans will support their education attainment and is looking forward to undertaking work experience.

Children are offered a wide range of activities and experiences. They have been horse riding, visited theme parks, been camping and attended Premier League football matches. One child is looking forward to attending a music concert. Staff have created memory books for children to help preserve the positive memories of their time in the home.

The health needs of the children are addressed and staff use creative ways when necessary to support children to attend appointments. Additional support for children is available, such as from therapists. Individual sessions with children illustrate that children understand healthy relationships.

Equality and diversity are promoted. Staff support children to engage in cultural celebrations that are important to them, as well as including children in celebrations that are important to the staff. This provides children with opportunities to learn about different cultures. Staff use opportunities as they arise to discuss equality, diversity and culture, to help broaden children's views. Additional external support is also secured at times to help children to develop a wider understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

Children's views and wishes are sought and acted on. When staff found that children's meetings were unsuccessful in gaining children's views, staff engaged with each child individually. This resulted in children being more open about how they felt. Children have their say around food and menus, any activities that they would like to do and any

changes that they would like to make in the home. Some areas of the home have recently been decorated to children's tastes.

Children are able to personalise their bedrooms to their own tastes and expressions. Children generally live in a well-maintained environment and any damage caused in the home is promptly rectified. However, when there have been incidents that have caused a mess, this is not always fully cleared up, and visible food remnants have remained. This can impact on the children wanting to take pride in their home.

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

Safety plans and risk management plans for children are thorough and give clear guidance for staff to follow when children are at risk. Planning has included collaboration with external professionals, including mental health professionals, to ensure that responses from staff meet the children's needs. Staff have received additional training to manage children's risks.

Staff understand safeguarding processes and act promptly to address risks for children, and they take appropriate action when concerns escalate. The manager attends weekly meetings to identify further strategies to minimise risks to children. The staff work closely alongside the wider professional network to keep the children safe.

The management team takes effective action when responding to safeguarding concerns. Allegations made by children are fully investigated and relevant authorities are notified. Children are supported throughout the process. Children are informed of the outcomes and are supported to rebuild positive relationships with staff.

Children do go missing from the home. However, when this happens, staff diligently follow the agreed protocols and work well with the police. Staff maintain detailed records of the event and the actions that they take. Children are offered the opportunity to discuss why they have gone missing and what staff can do to support a reduction in incidents of children going missing. Consequently, staff keep children as safe as possible when they go missing from the home.

On occasion, staff have used financial or punitive consequences when managing children's behaviour. The manager has subsequently delivered training to staff to support their understanding of the difference between a punishment and a consequence. As a result, staff have a better understanding of how to implement effective consequences that help children to better understand the impact that their behaviour can have on others.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort to keep children safe. Children are given the opportunity to reflect on these incidents with staff. However, physical intervention recordings are basic and do not contain the detail required to fully understand the incident or which members of staff were involved. As a result of unclear recordings,

members of staff involved in the incidents are not always spoken with afterwards. This is a missed opportunity for reflection with staff and to ensure their welfare.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a good understanding of children's strengths and vulnerabilities and is committed to ensuring that children receive high-quality care. The manager advocates for the children and is not afraid to challenge professionals when decisions are made that she believes are not in the best interests of children.

The manager has effective monitoring systems and action plans in place that support the development of the home. These systems have helped her to identify areas of weakness and the remedial actions required. For example, a member of the management team is now in the home over the weekend to support staff and to ensure the timely submission of notifications when incidents have occurred at that time. The manager has also developed systems so that actions set for children in reviews can be tracked and achieved. This supports progress for children.

When a placement for a child was unsuccessful, the manager conducted a learning review. The findings from the review informed the transition process for the children currently living in the home. The manager ensured that the children who have moved in since the learning review have had the opportunity to visit the home and meet staff before placements are agreed. This means that transitions are more tailored to meet children's needs before admission. External professionals are happy with the transition plans for children currently living in the home.

Staff benefit from effective systems of support and supervision. The management team provides regular, reflective supervision sessions and annual appraisals. Supervisions are thorough and staff find these helpful. Supervisions cover a wide range of subjects and allow staff to give and receive feedback, as well as to reflect on practice. Staff also have access to regular reflection sessions with an external psychologist. This supports resilience and helps to develop an understanding of children's experiences. The manager has good systems in place for staff development. She is passionate about highlighting good practice and ensuring that staff receive acknowledgment for their good work.

Professionals acknowledge the quality of care that children receive and how committed staff are to caring for the children. Professionals highlight that communication regarding the children is generally good, although updates have not always been shared as quickly as they could be. This means that, at times, external professionals do not have all of the relevant information regarding the child, and this may impact on decisions made.

Staff speak highly of their colleagues and of the support that they receive from each other. When staff have experienced challenging times in the home, they feel that they have been able to rely on one another. Staff also speak positively of the support that they receive from the management team.

At times, there are insufficient staff in the home to meet the needs of the children. On occasion, the home is supported by colleagues from other remits within the organisation. The presence of unfamiliar staff has led to some children feeling less secure in the home. At the inspection, the manager agreed to review the staffing arrangements.

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 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 has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d))	1 October 2025
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(b)(i))	1 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a clean environment at all times. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff engage with external agencies proactively and ensure that all relevant information is shared as soon as possible. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.7)

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: 2730126

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Highlands Care Solutions

Registered provider address: 4 Jasmine Court, London Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks TN15 6BW

Responsible individual: Sarah Chitongo

Registered manager: Carly Stephens

Inspector

Louise Webling, Social Care Inspector

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