

2742968

Registered provider: Dimensions Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company and is registered to provide care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of inspection, four children were living in the home. Three children were spoken to during the inspection.

The home is led by a qualified registered manager who has been in post since October 2023.

This is the first inspection after registration.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 August and 16 September 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive relationships with a core group of staff. This means that they are able to accept support and encouragement, which helps them to make progress in some areas of their lives. One child said, 'I feel loved and cared for here.'

Since the home was registered with Ofsted, eight children have moved into the home. Four children have moved out of the home, with two of these children experiencing unplanned moves that were not in line with their plan. Another child returned to their family for a visit and stayed. This was in line with their wishes and with the permission of their placing local authority.

Staff promote children's independence well. Children are encouraged to develop their skills, including cooking, budgeting and making safe decisions in the home and in the community. One child was helped to practise and prepare for living more independently. This child moved on to live in supported accommodation in line with their plan. They remain in contact with staff and share updates about their progress.

Children have access to routine health services. Children are helped to attend health appointments that they did not have access to before. The manager's efforts in advocating for specialist support have led to additional services being offered to children. One child was supported to manage their own medication in agreement with their social worker. This practice helps children to understand the importance of looking after their health.

The importance of children spending time with friends and family is well understood by staff. Children are helped to see their family members. One child spends time every weekend with a parent. Staff have also arranged for the child to have a sleepover with a friend, which the child enjoyed.

The importance of education is consistently recognised by the staff in the home. One child attends a specialist school provision in line with their needs. Staff understand the child's aspirations to work in the beauty industry and encourage her to remain focused on this. One child who moved in just before the inspection is not yet in education. Two other children have tutors who provide education to them in the home. Both children take part in daily lessons.

Children choose activities based on their interests. Three children recently enjoyed a holiday together with staff. Other children have enjoyed going to a concert and visiting the beach.

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

Care planning for two children has been poor. The placing authority completed a review of one child's circumstances. There was some learning for the home, but it is acknowledged that not all relevant information had been shared with the home before the child moved in. The assessment for another child was not robust and did not adequately consider the child's complex needs alongside the needs of the other children. These shortfalls caused disruption and instability for both children, who moved out of the home a few months after moving in. The children already living in the home have also been negatively affected by this poor decision-making. This has been acknowledged by managers, and measures are being put into place to address this.

Risk assessments and behaviour support plans are detailed and provide staff with guidance and strategies to manage behaviours. Managers update assessments in response to children's evolving needs. However, staff do not always follow these plans. On one occasion, a child was left alone for a short time, in breach of their care arrangements. They consequently left the home and became missing. On another occasion, a child's behaviour escalated when they were involved in an activity that they should not have taken part in.

When staff physically intervene with children, this is done to keep the children safe. However, staff do not consistently use strategies recorded in children's support plans to de-escalate situations. The records from these incidents are detailed but not always completed fully in a timely manner. Their effectiveness as a tool to review practice or to identify any changes that may be required is reduced.

There have been two medication errors made in relation to one child in the last month. Neither had any negative consequences for the child. These errors were identified and investigated and led to actions to reduce the risk of future repetition.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and how to report any concern they may have. Allegations and concerns are dealt with appropriately and reported to the relevant safeguarding partners.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Monitoring and review systems help managers to understand the strengths and areas of development in the home. Managers complete regular audits, and these have been used to inform team meetings and training for staff.

Managers are strong advocates for children. They actively challenge relevant professionals when required. The registered manager has advocated for children in relation to their health and educational needs. This has led to applications for specialist assessments regarding children's education and children's health needs being met by the appropriate service.

Staff are positive about working in the home. They feel supported by managers. Supervision takes place but is not always in line with the home's policy in relation to frequency. Staff are up to date with training, and newer staff have found the induction process helpful.

When there are shortfalls in practice, managers share learning with staff. Additional training and support are put into place to promote staff development. This proactive approach has led to a learning culture in the home where reflection is encouraged.

Managers work in partnership with relevant agencies. This collaborative working means that children have professionals who strive to provide good care. Two children's social workers shared positive feedback about the care and support offered to children.

The registered manager has at times taken on a few shifts to support the team. This has been in recent months following one child moving into the home and incidents involving this child increasing. As a result, this reduced the manager's capacity for some aspects of their role. They did not always ensure notifiable incidents were reported to Ofsted in a timely manner. This affects the regulator's ability to monitor how children are safeguarded effectively.

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)) This relates to the manager ensuring that staff follow children's plans and understand how to protect children.	30 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—	30 September 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that they have all the required information and take into account staff's experience and skills when considering new children coming to live at the home. This also relates to ensuring that children receive well-planned care throughout their time at the home.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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 child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the	30 September 2024

measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; 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; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1) (a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	30 September 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 2742968

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dimensions Care Limited

Registered provider address: 5 Brooklands Place, Brooklands Road, Sale, Cheshire M33 3SD

Responsible individual: Laura Williams

Registered manager: Karen Humphreys

Inspector

Janet Fraser, Social Care Inspector

Nurul Kabir, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2024