

2746282

Registered provider: Guiding Light Care 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 two children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2025.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 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: 16 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/04/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector spoke with both children during the inspection.

The children have positive relationships with staff and enjoy spending time with them. For one child, being able to trust adults and accept their care is significant progress. Children have trusted adults who they can openly talk to. A parent commented that the home is the best home their child has ever lived in and said, 'Staff are wonderful, and they fully understand [name of child] when nobody has before. Living at the home has done [name of child] the world of good.' Parents feel assured that children receive good-quality care.

The staff support children in having time with family, taking into account children's wishes. The manager is an excellent advocate for children. One child has benefited from increased family time and overnight stays as a result. Due to the child's personal circumstances, the increased time with family is very important to them.

Children have good opportunities to participate in various activities. They have enjoyed car experiences, day trips and visitor attractions. One child is part of the Children in Care Council, and another has been on holiday to the seaside. A child is being helped to plan a holiday with their family. Children volunteer in the community and have raised money for charity.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved on from the home for safety reasons. This was beyond the control of the manager, who recognised the effect it was having on a child living at the home. The move was planned and was managed sensitively in difficult circumstances.

Children's health needs are generally well considered. Children attend routine appointments. Both children have gym memberships and regularly enjoy walking and playing football. Generally, children are encouraged with healthy eating, and food is well balanced and home-made. However, evening meals do not consistently include healthier elements.

One child is enrolled in full-time education. The child has high attendance, is making good progress, and takes pride in their academic achievements. Despite multiple applications, one child has been without an education provision for an extended period. In the interim, the manager has demonstrated creativity and has identified several alternative provisions. The manager has strongly advocated for the child and has worked with the social worker to make a formal complaint to the director of children's services regarding the lack of education opportunities. However, the child has not attended any formal education for a few months. The child engages with informal education sporadically. There is no structured plan for informal education opportunities. When the

child has engaged, there is no record of his learning, and therefore the manager cannot monitor the quality of learning.

The home is cosy and welcoming, and it feels like a family home. The children personalise their bedrooms. However, the home requires some minor improvements, including repairs. Some carpets need cleaning, and the gardens require weeding.

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

Children are safeguarded and feel safe in the home. The manager has ensured that the staff have appropriate training and that they understand safeguarding procedures. Despite this, for reasons beyond the manager's control, a child has sometimes been exposed to risky situations.

Effective protocols provide useful guidance to staff on managing incidents when children go missing from the home. Staff manage such incidents well and with sensitivity. Staff always welcome children back to the home and explore the reasons the child has gone missing. The manager listens to children and has made changes that have led to a significant reduction in missing-from-home incidents.

The manager works in a multi-agency way to safeguard children. She has regular strategy meetings to agree on one child's safety plans. Staff and an external professional have carried out extensive work to help educate a child who is at risk of being exploited. They have helped the child recognise and understand the risks.

Allegations are managed promptly and effectively. The manager informs relevant professionals and works with other professionals to help keep children safer.

One child has complex behavioural support needs. On two occasions, staff called the police to manage behaviour. The manager has identified that such action was unnecessary. She debriefed the staff and provided additional behaviour management training. However, the child's behaviour support plan is unclear as to when the threshold for police intervention has been met. The child has not been criminalised, but clearer guidance for staff will prevent it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is dedicated to ensuring that children receive good care. She is working towards a relevant managerial qualification. She is supported by an experienced responsible individual. One child said, 'She is the best manager ever, and I love spending time with her.' The manager spends quality time with children.

Staff said they feel valued and respected by the manager. Staff receive regular good-quality supervision. One staff member said, 'What truly stands out to me is the exceptional management team and team collaboration.' Staff feel proud to work at the home, and staff morale is high.

The staff receive an in-depth induction, including shadow shifts with experienced staff. Staff training is good quality and helps them understand children's individual needs. Staff have received training from the police to further their knowledge around risks to children when they go missing from the home.

Feedback from social workers is mixed. One social worker spoke highly of the manager and staff and said, 'The child needs containment, safety and stability, and that is exactly what [name of child] gets from the staff. It is the first time [name of child] has ever been fully understood.' Another social worker commented that their child is happy at the home and said that their needs are generally well met. However, the relationship between professionals can be strained, communication is not concise, and one social worker expressed that expectations are not always met. Before the inspection, the responsible individual and manager requested a meeting to address the social worker's concerns.

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— promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(v)) In particular, the provider must ensure that children who are not accessing formal education have structured plans in place for informal learning and that education outcomes are monitored until a suitable provision is secured.	1 October 2025
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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)) In particular, ensure that staff are given clear guidance about behaviour management, including what circumstances are appropriate for police involvement.	1 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing environment that meets children's needs. This specifically relates to repairing the understairs cupboard, cleaning carpets and weeding the gardens. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff work towards supporting the children with healthy lifestyles. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.7)

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: 2746282

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Guiding Light Care Limited

Registered provider address: 12 Willow Road, Bedford MK42 0QU

Responsible individual: Luke Tripkovic

Registered manager: Louise Griffiths

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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