

2747567

Registered provider: Safe Places for Children UK

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 27 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The inspector spoke with the child during the inspection.

One child has lived at the home since it opened. The child initially settled well. They said, 'I am not gonna lie, this is the best home I have ever lived in.' However, due to external factors, the staff have not been able to help the child feel safe in the area. There is a plan for the child to move to a new home. Their belongings are all packed and clearly visible in the living areas, despite not having a formal date for the child to move. This does not give the child a sense of stability or belonging.

The staff recognise the importance of education. When the child is not receiving formal education, the staff work with external agencies to promote alternative provisions. The child is encouraged to engage with home tutoring and learn through natural opportunities, such as creative activities.

The staff understand the child's needs. They have built a positive relationship with the child. Staff spend time with the child and encourage them to develop interests and engage in activities such as film nights and playing golf. The child can identify staff who they can talk to and describe the different things they like about each staff member.

Staff support the child in developing independence skills. They listen to the child and consider their views, wishes and feelings. Staff are strong advocates for the child's involvement in their care plan. The child's confidence has grown. They now attend their meetings and express their opinions about the care they receive.

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

Staff respond effectively when the child goes missing from home. A robust missing-from-home protocol is in place, which is regularly reviewed. The child is offered return home interviews. These interviews support professionals in understanding the reasons why the child goes missing from home and have resulted in a reduction in the number of incidents that occur.

The manager and staff do not ensure that the home environment is well maintained and free of hazards. There have been two incidents of fire-setting, which staff responded to promptly. However, staff do not ensure that the home is free of clutter to prevent the risk of fire spreading. The fire door mechanisms were not in good working order, and door wedges were being used to hold them open. These have now been removed. Following the last incident, the manager did not ask the fire service to visit the home.

Staff support children who are struggling to manage their emotions. When the child is in crisis, staff help them access the support that they need. Staff follow the advice of medical professionals to support the child's emotional well-being. Referrals are made to appropriate mental health professionals, and additional therapeutic support is requested.

The manager ensures that risk assessments for the child are in place. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed, either monthly or following incidents. They provide clear actions and guidelines to enable staff to understand how to manage and reduce risks.

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

A qualified and experienced registered manager oversees the care provided by staff and ensures that systems are in place to monitor the child's progress. The independent person visits the home each month. The manager values their input and uses it to improve practice.

The manager ensures that the child receives consistent care from a permanent staff team. The staffing level is based on one-to-one support, as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. However, there is little flexibility to cover staff absence and when the child is in crisis. Managers and staff have covered extra shifts. This, in addition to an increase in incidents, has left staff feeling exhausted, and the plan is for the child to move out. The manager has identified this as a shortfall and is in the process of recruiting bank staff.

All staff have access to extensive training. The manager ensures that all staff receive training to support them in fulfilling the expectations of their roles and meeting the child's individual needs. All staff have completed the induction training and fire safety training.

The manager ensures that there are monthly team meetings, and all staff receive regular supervision sessions. Staff have attended a team-building day. Supervision sessions and team meetings have a clear structure, and they consider the staff's well-being and training and development needs, as well as the child's needs. Staff can talk openly about any concerns and work together to resolve them.

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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home is well maintained and free of potential fire hazards. The registered person must ensure that fire door mechanisms are in good working order, and door wedges must not be used. In the event of a fire, the registered person must ensure that the fire service is contacted.	24 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that contingency plans are in place in the event of staff shortages. When there is an increase in risk, leaders and managers should ensure that they make a formal assessment of the implications for the child's care and the staff's ability to continue meeting their needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should ensure that transitions out of the home are managed with sensitivity to the child's needs, wishes and feelings. The manager and staff should ensure that they continue to provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming and supportive for as long as the child lives in the home, even when they have a plan to move. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: 2747567

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Safe Places for Children UK

Registered provider address: First Floor, Triad House, Mountbatten Court, Worrall Street, Congleton, Cheshire East CW12 1DT

Responsible individual: Natalie Kennedy

Registered manager: Lorraine Aston-Donley

Inspector

Sarah Probert, Social Care Inspector

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