

2747588

Registered provider: Bithoms Support Services Ltd

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, emotional or mental health difficulties. At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 6 March 2025.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 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: 20 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has been helped to successfully move into semi-independent living. This child benefited from well-planned preparation and had a positive experience moving out of the home. One child remains living in the home and has made good progress. One child recently moved in as an emergency. They are receiving a high level of support and monitoring from the staff and professional team to help them settle.

Staff demonstrate a calm, natural approach to children. They employ humour and positive communication as a strategy to connect with them, reinforce boundaries and de-escalate situations when children are upset. Support for one child is being continuously adapted to understand how best to work with them. The managers mentor and guide staff on how to navigate conflicts and agree new boundaries with children. This is having a positive impact and reducing risk-taking behaviour effectively.

Children are helped to make progress relative to their starting points. One child can cycle to a football club independently and is building experience and confidence with using trains. Another child has quickly started to achieve small measures of progress that are significant steps for them. Social work professionals have complimented the team on helping the child to settle and manage their emotions more effectively.

Managers ensure that children have appropriate access to education that suits their individual needs. One child has been helped to overcome personal barriers towards going to school, through clear expectations and being motivated with appropriate rewards for good attendance. As a result, they go to school regularly and are achieving academically. Another child is not yet in education. Managers and professionals recognise that this child needs time to settle in the home first. This means that children are being helped to tackle challenges at their own pace and have the best chance of moving forward successfully.

Children are helped to have contact with the people who are important to them, at a level and pace that they are happy with. Where appropriate, children are encouraged to build relationships with family. If there are challenges, managers work with professionals to ensure that children have the support network that they require, and children's views and wishes are kept at the centre of plans.

Children's interests and hobbies are promoted and supported by staff. Children are helped to do the activities they love, while being encouraged to try new things. Children are actively being helped to spend time with others in a safe way. Where there are identified risks, staff work with children around how they can keep seeing friends in a positive way that will help them to develop towards being more independent.

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

One child who recently moved into the home has complex needs and emerging behaviours. There have been several concerns for this child and incidents are being responded to dynamically by managers, in close consultation with the professional team. Managers demonstrate a commitment to finding positive strategies for keeping the child safe and give them a sense of stability despite a high level of challenge. Staff have a good understanding of how keep children safe and speak positively about the ongoing support from managers. Managers are striving to help the child build trusting relationships through consistent care and giving them tools to manage difficult situations and emotions.

Since the last inspection, children have not been routinely going missing from home. Children have been involved in decision-making and agreements about rules and expectations when they spend time on their own. As a result, children have been helped to develop their independence and confidence with spending time in the community. Recently, one child has started going missing from home. When these incidents have occurred, staff have followed protocols and ensured that children have been supported to return safely. Staff and managers are proactively working with the child and the professional team around reducing the risk of this behaviour. This adaptable practice is having positive results.

Staff and managers follow the organisation's processes when responding to safeguarding concerns. Allegations made against staff are reported to relevant safeguarding professionals and investigated. Records about allegations and follow up action taken are clear. Work is carried out with children to help them talk about what happened. If a child makes allegations in response to staff setting boundaries, managers explore this with the professional team to find the best way of providing support. During the inspection, there were several allegations that were being investigated by the professional team.

Since the last inspection, there have been a low number of restraints. Staff consistently use de-escalation approaches to manage children's behaviour. Where a child is held to keep them safe during a difficult time, this is as a last resort and the child is offered the opportunity to reflect following the incident. Records of restraints are detailed and practices used are reviewed by managers to ensure that they are appropriate and required. During the inspection, a restraint that was reported to the relevant professionals was being reviewed and investigated.

Systems are in place to ensure that staff working in the home with children are safely recruited. Recruitment records are clear, well organised and evidence that information has been checked and verified by managers.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is new to the home. They have a calm, considered approach that models a culture of development and learning with the staff team. There is a strong focus on offering children a sense of stability and belonging, to help them overcome any

challenges they may face. The registered manager is developing in his role and works closely with the home manager, who is passionate about making the home the best it can be. They have worked hard to make improvements in all areas. Both managers have a good understanding of children's histories and current needs, and place a strong emphasis on helping staff understand what children's behaviour is communicating. Professionals said that the home manager is 'amazing' and the registered manager's presence is having a positive influence on children and helping to reduce incidents.

Management oversight of the home is robust. Managers have clear and organised systems. This means that they can monitor the quality of care provided and understand how the service needs to be developed. Managers act on the information they receive and maintain regular communication with professionals and staff. Children's care plans are clear and well completed. The manager has ambitions for continuing to make improvements to the home, the information available to children and the quality of care provided.

Managers have improved arrangements for making decisions about new children moving into the home. Managers speak to professionals about children to understand if the home will be best suited for them, and that staff have the skills meet the child's individual needs. Views are sought from children who live in the home and the environment is adapted according to children's wishes. When new children move in, they are encouraged to spend time with other children both at home and in the community. This helps them to foster positive relationships with each other.

Staff feel supported by managers and appreciate having day-to-day guidance and support in their role. Staff are provided with the appropriate induction and training, and the team has regular opportunities to meet and discuss care for children. The manager has been prioritising upskilling the team by working alongside staff and delivering additional bespoke training workshops. Managers recognise that staff need to continue developing their confidence and experience. Although managers have delivered training for children's specialist needs, they do not always ensure that staff understand and implement this. As a result, children feel that staff do not always understand their needs.

Children are encouraged to share their views and there is a system for children to make complaints. Children have time to talk to managers about their concerns and explore what they want to happen to make things better. Complaints made by children and professionals have been listened to by managers. However, they are not always recorded or appropriately responded to. This means that professionals are not kept up to date about what has happened because of their complaint, and a pattern of issues raised about staff practice were not clearly understood or evidenced.

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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(ii)) In particular, ensure that there is a record made of any complaint and the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation is communicated to all the relevant people. In particular, ensure that following training, staff have the knowledge and skills to meet children's specialist needs. If there are concerns about staff practice, ensure that action is taken to address this and appropriately monitor it.	30 June 2025

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: 2747588

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bithoms Support Services Ltd

Responsible individual: Kehinde Adenola

Registered manager: Fabjan Pepaj

Inspector

Shirin White, Social Care Inspector

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