

2748592

Registered provider: Island Choices Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of three homes operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties. All of the places are commissioned by one local authority.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2024.

The home registered with Ofsted in May 2024, and this is the first inspection.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 January 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: 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

Three children have moved into the home since it opened. The manager thoughtfully plans the moves in for children, with careful assessments of their needs. For example, one child's move involved a well-considered reintroduction into school. One professional commented that staff had worked hard to help support their child to settle into the home. As a result of the care taken by staff, children's moves into the home have been positive experiences.

Staff provide warm and nurturing care to children. Staff invest in spending good-quality time with children. This approach has helped children to form relationships with staff quickly. The social worker of one child noted that the child did not talk when they first moved in, but they now feel safe and can communicate well.

Staff promote the children's education. One child is in full-time education with excellent attendance. The manager is working with the local authority to secure education for the other two children and challenges the local authority appropriately to ensure that decisions are made in the children's best interests. While children are not in education, staff support them in completing schoolwork at home.

Staff have identified and mediated conflict between children. They have regular restorative conversations with children to develop insight into the impact of their actions. Staff have plans to manage this conflict, and risks are assessed with children's social workers. Staff remind children of the rules of the home to reduce conflict.

Children are provided with a range of positive experiences. Staff help children to develop independence skills, for example by involving them in cooking meals. Children enjoy activities in the home such as trampolining, arts and crafts and playing video games with staff. Staff take children on activities away from the home, such as go-karting, shopping, going to the cinema and visiting local attractions. Children are also able to spend time with their friends.

The home is in good condition. Children's rooms are highly personalised, and children can ask for new items of furniture when needed. Staff have listened to children about how to set out the communal areas. A tumble dryer has been installed in the garage to provide more space in the kitchen. However, there is no fire detection in the garage area, and this has not been assessed by fire specialists.

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

Staff understand the risks for children. They talk often with children about risks, and they complete assessments of risks. The risks to one child increase when they are away from the home. Staff have assessed these risks and speak with the child often, helping

them to develop an insight into risks. Staff have developed relationships with the friends of the children; this helps to ensure that children are safe when away from the home.

Staff respond well when children are missing from home. Staff share their concerns with safeguarding agencies, such as the police and social services. Staff have well-developed plans, including key contacts to help find children. Staff complete clear records showing the actions taken. Professionals say that staff act appropriately to safeguard children when they are missing from home.

The use of restrictions and surveillance in the home is sensitively assessed. Staff have completed risk assessments before considering the use of restrictions in the home. There were risks for children accessing the kitchen overnight. The manager has agreed with the children's social workers that the kitchen is locked during a defined period. This is kept under review with the children and staff. One child has a door alarm; the use of the alarm has been risk assessed and is kept under review.

Staff have regular conversations with children to promote their health and routines, such as toothbrushing. Staff help children to identify ways of relaxing. Staff promote healthy eating routines with children and active lifestyles, such as going to the gym and on bike rides.

There are clear positive behaviour management plans for children, and there has been no use of physical intervention. Staff regularly praise children for making safe decisions and use a restorative approach to repairing relationships. Staff have recorded the consequences they have used with the children. However, the management review of these does not scrutinise their fairness or effectiveness.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager of the home is permanent and is working towards their qualification. The manager is dedicated and child-focused. They are a good advocate for the children. The manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. As more children have moved in, the manager has made changes to practice, using key events as learning opportunities.

The manager is highly involved in the children's care. They have introduced progress trackers. These clearly show the progress that children are making while living in the home. The manager spends a lot of time with the children. As a result, they are very aware of the children's journeys and progress.

Staff are well supported. New staff have a detailed and structured induction into the home. All staff are well trained, including being trained in the specific needs of the children. Staff have regular, good-quality supervision. These supervision sessions are well recorded, including discussions about children, performance, well-being and development.

Professionals report good, regular communication. They are informed of situations that arise and work collaboratively with staff to support the child's best interests.

Children are listened to. They know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy. The manager tracks children's requests on a 'You asked, We did' tracker. Children are offered choices regarding their bedding and their food preferences. They meet with staff to plan activities, menus and developments in the home, and they are involved in day-to-day decisions about their care and activities.

There have been two occasions where Ofsted has not been notified of a serious event. One incident involved a child being missing from home overnight and another involved a child needing paramedic attention. This has limited the oversight from Ofsted as the regulator. There was no impact on the safety of children, as staff acted appropriately.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirement

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 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)) In particular, ensure that incidents which the manager considers serious are notified to Ofsted without delay.	24 January 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should consult with relevant fire professionals about fire alarm coverage in newly used outbuildings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all consequences used are subject to regular scrutiny, ensuring that the use is fair and effective. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: 2748592

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Island Choices Ltd

Registered provider address: East Quay, Kite Hill, Wootton Bridge, Ryde PO33 4LA

Responsible individual: William Stanbridge

Registered manager: Helen Gough

Inspector

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector

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