

# 2772912

Registered provider: Gemstones Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in March 2024. The registered manager has left, which has resulted in this early inspection. This is the home's first inspection.

The new manager is suitably qualified and intends to make an application to register.

Two children were living at the home and were present during the inspection.

### Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2024

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
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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 provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** no previous inspection

**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**

Since the home opened, two children have moved in. Both children benefited from a well-planned move. This ensured that the children were well informed about their new home and met staff before moving in.

Children make progress. Both children have developed positive and trusted relationships with most staff. This has helped the children to feel comfortable in sharing their concerns, thoughts and feelings. As a result, the staff know the children well and can respond to their changing needs. Children take part in a range of different activities and have enjoyed celebrating a child's birthday, which has been a new experience.

Both children have recently completed their GCSEs. The staff offered additional support as needed and have advocated well to ensure that the children's schools offered the same level of support. One child has secured a college placement and the other is considering an apprenticeship. The staff are supporting the children to write their CVs and apply for paid and voluntary work to help extend their opportunities and experience.

Staff support children to maintain relationships with their friends and families. The staff establish good relationships with family members to help support the children's care. The children are encouraged to invite family members to the home. This helps parents and family members to remain involved in children's lives and the care they receive.

Children's health needs are met. Staff encourage children to take responsibility for booking and attending their appointments. The staff support the children with their medication and when issues arise, promptly seek advice from health professionals. Work with children on the use of vapes has assisted one child to significantly reduce their use. Therapeutic support is available to children in line with their needs.

The home is warm and welcoming and decorated to a high standard throughout. Personal touches, including photos of the children and soft furnishings, give a homely feel. The children benefit from a large living room, dining space for arts and crafts and an additional annex as a games room. The children's bedrooms are well maintained and personalised to their individual tastes.

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

Despite knowing a child cycles regularly in the local area and on busy roads, staff have not ensured the child has a helmet to wear. The child had a minor accident, but staff still did not recognise the risks to the child riding their bike without a helmet. This leaves the child at risk of harm when using their bike. The manager is arranging for a helmet to be bought as a matter of urgency.

In other areas children are supported to safely take age-appropriate risks. For example, children are able to go out alone and are helped to safely use devices such as mobile phones and laptops. Staff do some good work to support children to understand risk. Children and staff engage in meaningful conversations and activities about risk and how to keep safe. Topics include online safety, grooming and healthy relationships.

Children have behaviour support plans and risk assessments. Although plans are reviewed, they are generic, brief and do not provide staff with clear guidance about how to reduce or respond to risk.

Staff clearly understand the missing-from-home protocol and respond appropriately when they are aware that a child goes missing. Return home interviews are carried out and the staff complete direct work with the children around the risks of being missing. However, on one occasion recently, staff were unaware when one child left the property during the night. This is being investigated by managers. Managers have acted promptly and additional security has been fitted to the front door to reduce the risk of this happening again.

The safe recruitment of staff supports children's welfare.

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

The registered manager left at short notice. A senior member of staff has taken up post as the new manager. The manager has good relationships with the children. Spending time with the children is prioritised and children can easily share their views with the manager.

The manager has identified areas for practice development and is collaborating with staff to implement change. For example, the manager intends that work will be done to involve children in their care planning and to develop effective monitoring systems to help her understand the operation of the home.

There have been four allegations made against staff. These have been investigated appropriately. However, managers have failed to notify Ofsted about three of them. Furthermore, it is not always clear that the children have been kept informed when the investigation has concluded.

The manager feels supported by the responsible individual. A deputy manager role has been added to the management structure and the person appointed has started work at the home. The manager and deputy share the same values and vision for the home.

New members of staff complete an induction that includes training relevant to the role. The progress and development of staff are monitored through regular professional supervision. The staff also have access to clinical supervision.

External professionals are positive about the communication and engagement of the manager and staff team and the care that children receive. Professionals have commented on the positive progress that children have made since living in the home.

The statement of purpose for the home is not up to date. This reduces the external oversight of the operation of the home.

## 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       |
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| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that children's plans contain all the necessary information to help staff to support children's safety and progress. Also, that when children ride a bike, they have the required equipment to keep them safe.</p> | 2 August 2024  |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 30 August 2024 |

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| <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.<br/>(Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(b)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that the manager ensures that that children’s plans are child focused and include their views, that monitoring systems are developed and effectively implemented and that audits are used to develop the home.</p> |                     |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child —</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p>26 July 2024</p> |

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| (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) |  |
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### Recommendation

- The registered person is required to develop and keep under review a "Statement of Purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule 1). Specifically, this relates to ensuring the regulator is provided with a copy of the reviewed SOP in a timely way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 14, paragraph 13.5)

### 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:** 2772912

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Gemstones Care Limited

**Responsible individual:** Tamsin Lucas

**Registered manager:** Zoe Askew

## Inspector

Stacie Sharpe, Social Care Inspector

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