

2783212

Registered provider: Amber Care Group (UK) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for one child who may experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties and have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2024.

This is the first inspection of the home since registration in March 2024.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024

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

Children are welcomed into their new home after careful introductions. Staff take time to get to know the child before they move in and visit them at their current home to better understand their needs and routines. This means that when the child moves in, familiar staff can provide care to them while they get to know the other adults in the home. This approach provides continuity of care for the child during an emotionally difficult time.

Staff work to build positive relationships with the child. The child communicates using their own mix of sign-language and pictures that staff have learned to understand. Staff work in line with agreed plans that create a sense of stability and allow the child to make progress.

Staff use encouragement and praise to engage the child in developing their own self-care skills. Small changes to the child's routine are helping to reduce the need for staff to perform personal care. As a result, the child feels a sense of dignity and a greater degree of independence.

The child is cared for by staff who understand and promote their cultural and religious identity. The home reflects the child's individuality with pictures and acknowledgements throughout the home. The child attends their local mosque and cultural events and is supported to practice their faith as part of their daily routine.

Staff work with those who are important to the child and arrange for them to spend time together. When there are difficulties, the staff act quickly to support the child and help them to engage in activities they enjoy. This supports the child's positive experience of family time.

The child enjoys regular activities and new experiences. The manager and staff have purchased travel aids that allow the child to travel in the car, walk in the community and experience bus travel for the first time. The child enjoys daily activities as part of their normal routine and has experienced trips to theme parks and cultural celebrations.

The manager and staff have created communal areas of the home that reflect the child's culture and interests. The walls are painted professionally with murals rather than picture frames to reduce potential damage and maintain a homely feel. The child's items of interest are placed around the home so that their personal space is not limited to their bedroom.

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

Staff are vigilant and act to keep the child safe when they are experiencing difficult emotions. Children can express their feelings and receive support from staff they trust. Staff make prompt referrals to child and adolescent mental health services and the

child's doctor to promote their engagement with specialist services. The child's plans are updated to instruct staff to provide additional care and monitoring at times when the child is at greater risk of harm.

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to prevent harm to the child, staff and their environment. The child's voice is considered in behaviour management plans, and staff take part in debriefs following any holds. The manager reviews each incident and reflects on practice to improve care for the child. This allows the manager to identify where additional training for staff will enable them to better meet the needs of the child.

The manager responds appropriately to safeguarding concerns involving staff. The manager acts quickly to establish facts and inform relevant agencies. Procedures are followed in line with the home's policies, children are protected and staff are supported through HR processes. This helps to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

There are some issues that need to be addressed. The bathroom has standing water and mould forming where the child washes and brushes their teeth. There are pipes from a damaged radiator capped off at floor level, which are hazardous to the child and staff. This is the only space for bathing and washing and is used regularly in line with the child's religious practices. The bathroom is in need of repair to avoid injury or health issues.

Safer recruitment practices are not adhered to in full. The manager has completed Disclosure and Barring Service checks and gained references for staff but did not complete overseas checks for staff who have lived and worked abroad. This does not provide assurances that adults who are employed are suitably vetted before working in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager uses the information from her own audits, and that of external monitoring, to improve the quality of care that children receive. When shortfalls are identified, these are addressed quickly. The manager identified issues with the quality of the independent visitor reports and sought to change the provider. As a result, the reports are now identifying shortfalls and making recommendations. This assists the manager in making improvements to the quality of care the child receives.

Leaders and managers use reflective practice to support the staff's understanding of their own impact on the care that they provide. Senior leaders complete monthly observations of staff to assess their use of trauma-informed practice. Group reflection takes place to discuss any lessons that could be learned from incidents in the home, and practice issues are discussed openly. This helps to progress the learning and development of the team.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals of their practice. Important information is discussed to ensure a consistent response when

safeguarding children. The focus on the development of staff is evident throughout supervision records.

Leaders and manager have not made staff aware of the 'Family and Close Relationships' policy. Two of the home's staff are related and staff are aware of the family connection. However, they are not clear on how any concerns about those staff would be raised or managed given their respective roles in the organisation.

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 staff— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(a)(vii)(d))	1 January 2025
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(a)(b)(d))	1 January 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are made familiar with the home's internal whistle-blowing procedures. In particular, those concerned with when staff are related. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', Page 53, paragraph 10.9)

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: 2783212

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Amber Care Group (UK) Ltd

Registered provider address: Boho Zero, 21 Gosford Street, Middlesbrough TS2 1BB

Responsible individual: Hayley Harland

Registered manager: Holly Meharban

Inspectors

Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

Laura Roberts, Social Care Inspector

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