

2791757

Registered provider: Happyhomes Residential Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It may provide care and accommodation for up to 2 children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024.

There was one child living at the home at the time of this inspection. Inspectors spoke with the child.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2026

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: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child has remained living at the home since the last inspection. They have developed good relationships with staff, who understand the child's needs well, which helps to keep them safe. Staff seek support from external services to ensure that the child receives the right support at the right time. The child is involved in the running of the home, and this makes them feel included. This helps the child to understand that staff genuinely care for them. The child describes the home as 'their' home, demonstrating a sense of ownership and belonging.

The home provides a spacious and homely environment that is welcoming. The child is able to personalise their own space and contribute to decisions about the rest of the home.

Staff support the child, who has struggled to engage with education. Staff help the child to overcome these barriers to education, and managers advocate strongly for the child to ensure that there is positive progress with education attendance and attainment. External professionals say that this is a strength of the staff team. Support from staff has led to improvements in school attendance for the child.

Staff have a good understanding of the health needs of the child. They work with external agencies to ensure that the child receives specialised support when this is needed.

The child is encouraged to explore and develop cultural experiences within the home. This helps them to be confident and to feel part of their diverse community.

Family members say that they have positive relationships with staff and that the child has made progress. Planning for family time is appropriate, and family members are included in celebrations, which helps the child to feel safe and secure. Family members say that the home is very homely and welcoming.

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

Staff talk to the child about their risks and vulnerabilities. They help to educate the child to make better choices to keep them safer when they are in the community. Managers update and review the child's risk assessments in a timely way. There are child-friendly plans in place, demonstrating that children have contributed to the decisions made about them. These plans give staff clear guidance about what steps they need to take to mitigate the risks to the child.

Staff will only hold or guide the child when it is necessary to keep them safe. The use of physical restraint is rare. Staff have the opportunity to talk about the incident when they have had to hold the child. However, these are not always reflective

discussions. There are missed opportunities for staff to identify strategies to reduce the risk of using physical restraint in the future.

Managers and staff are sometimes unclear on what they need to do when the child is missing from the home. Staff are proactive in trying to locate the child and will inform the police and partner agencies if they cannot be found. However, this is not always done in a consistent or timely way, which could delay the child being returned home.

When the child does return home, they are given the opportunity to speak to an independent person. However, this is sometimes by telephone, and the child does not always engage. This does not support the child to share why they went missing from the home and to help develop strategies to prevent this from happening again.

Safer recruitment is not always adhered to, and gaps in employment are not sufficiently explored. This means that leaders and managers cannot be entirely sure that people employed are safe to care for the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager will be leaving her post within a few weeks. There is a proactive response to find a replacement manager.

Managers are supportive of children's rights and will advocate for them to ensure they access the right education. External professionals recognise this as a strength which helps children to achieve to the best of their ability.

Managers ensure that staff have a structured induction programme, regular supervision sessions and annual appraisals. Supervisions are clear, purposeful and focus on the needs of children. There is a consistent approach, and the manager ensures there are processes in place to monitor agreed actions.

Staff have good relationships with the manager and are able to share any concerns when they need to. There is a positive culture within the home, and the manager recognises good practice.

There is a culture of learning among the staff team, and training is effective and up to date. Training is bespoke to the needs of children, ensuring that staff have the skills needed to provide good-quality care. Staff also complete their own research around issues affecting children and cascade their findings at team meetings.

Staffing is managed effectively, with no vacancies in the team. Managers use creative means to reduce the use of agency staff. This provides more consistency for children and helps lead to better outcomes for 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— 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)(b) (3)(d))	1 May 2026
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure.	1 May 2026

(Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(vii))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's procedures take into account the views of appropriate local services and have regard to police and local authority protocols for responding to missing person's incidents in the area where the home is located. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.29)

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: 2791757

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Happyhomes Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 73 Duke Street, Darlington, Durham DL3 7SD

Responsible individual: Sara Patel

Registered manager: Karen Hodgson-Clark

Inspectors

Shaun Martin, Social Care Inspector

Angela Ross, Social Care Inspector

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