

2801032

Registered provider: Polar Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties, mental disorders, or who are drug and alcohol dependent.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted on 28 August 2024.

One child was living at the home at the time of this inspection and was seen and spoken to by the inspectors.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 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: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager and staff have built strong, trusting relationships with the child currently living in the home. This has enabled the child to talk to staff about any worries and concerns they may have. Staff support the child to share their thoughts and feelings about the home, and the progress they are making, on a regular basis. This supports the child to feel listened to and valued.

Children have mixed experiences of moving in and out of the home. Two children were supported to visit the home and meet with staff before moving in. This supported one child to settle in quickly. However, the other child moved in, then out of the home very quickly. Leaders and managers did not consult fully with the relevant people before the child moved into the home. The child's risks and vulnerabilities were not fully known or understood. Consequently, the child experienced an unplanned move out of the home.

The child takes part in a range of activities, such as baking, trips to the funfair and visits to the gym. Experiences are captured in photos and have been used to create a memory book for the child. Direct work sessions take place regularly and in response to emerging needs. Records are detailed and include details of any further actions that may be needed to support the child.

Staff understand the child's health needs. The child is supported to attend both routine and specialist health appointments, such as the orthodontist, and at reviews of prescribed medication. This supports the child to remain in good health.

The child is not attending any formal education. The manager and staff advocate well for the child and the manager is proactive in challenging professionals to address this. This ensures that the child's education remains a shared priority. Staff engage the child in educational activities, such as visits to museums and quizzes. This helps the child to maintain positive routines while a suitable school is identified.

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

An individualised risk assessment and behaviour support plan are in place for the child, which guide staff. The plan is regularly reviewed. Strategies for staff to use to minimise risks are clearly set out. Staff have supported the child to create a safety plan. This helps the child to remember and implement strategies when they are feeling distressed. As a result, the child is safeguarded effectively.

A robust missing-from-home protocol is in place. On occasions when the child has been missing from home, staff have followed the procedures in place. They are persistent in contacting the child until they return home safely. The manager and staff have implemented a new strategy to minimise the missing-from-home risk. Consequently, the number of missing-from-home episodes has reduced.

Staff promote positive behaviour, and the child is rewarded when they have done well. The child has a clear plan in place that sets out what is expected of them. Consequences used are proportionate and restorative. The manager evaluates the effectiveness of any consequences.

When a significant incident occurred in the home, managers and staff responded appropriately. This ensured that children were safe. The police and multi-agency professionals were consulted, and effective safeguarding plans were made quickly.

A commissioned therapist spends time in the home. However, their role is not fully embedded. Not all staff have received training specific to the needs of the child. Although this has not compromised the child's safety, it does not ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to address the child's individual vulnerabilities.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are child focused and have high aspirations for the child. The manager has a therapeutic approach which is adopted by the staff team. The child said: '[Name of manager] is very good at what she does. She's here every day. She's a very hard worker and she's determined to support staff and me.'

Staff speak highly of leaders and managers and feel supported to fulfil their roles. One member of staff said: 'It has been very inspirational to work with such helpful and caring managers.'

The manager ensures that staff receive a well-planned induction to the home. This helps them to develop the skills they need to provide safe care to children. Staff receive regular, reflective supervision by suitably trained staff. Supervision is used to reflect on staff development, provide guidance and direction to the staff and to give staff the opportunity to share any feedback they may have.

Team meetings are held regularly and are well attended by staff, and in part, by the child. They are used to discuss the child's needs, wishes and feelings, and consider how they can be best met. There is a strong focus on staff well-being. A compliments box in the staff office allows staff and the child to acknowledge and compliment good practice. Team-building days help to develop and maintain positive relationships.

The manager has well-organised systems in place to ensure that she has strong oversight of the care being provided. She reviews all incidents and other records kept by staff. This means that she identifies any areas for development at the earliest opportunity.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all known risks about children's backgrounds are fully explored prior to a decision being made about whether those needs can be met.	16 April 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff have access to training and resources that support them to meet children's individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: 2801032

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Polar Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Halls House Farm, Chain Lane, Staining, Blackpool FY3 0DP

Responsible individual: Jonathan Broadstock

Registered manager: Bobbie-Jo Howarth

Inspectors

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

Anna Belshaw, Social Care Inspector

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