

2807623

Registered provider: The Foundation Project Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to two children. One child was living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The home registered with Ofsted in February 2024. The manager registered at the same time.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 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

This inspection was brought forward to address concerns received in notifications received by Ofsted. At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. The child was absent during the inspection.

One child has moved into the home since the home was registered. The child was supported to move in with a multi-agency approach. The staff and manager have prioritised relationship building with the child. As a result, the child has begun to form positive relationships with the manager and staff. These relationships have supported the child to make progress from their starting point.

Staff and managers have established good links with other professionals and agencies. There is good support from the allocated police community support officer and sexual health clinicians, who regularly visit the home.

Staff capture the child's views, wishes and feelings. When the child shares their views, these are responded to, and the child is given an outcome. This approach helps to support the child to share their views about the care they receive.

The staff team is diverse and brings a variety of backgrounds and experiences that enrich the home. The child's specific ethnic, cultural and identity needs are well understood by staff and celebrated. The home promotes diversity through cooking cultural dishes and regular discussions. This approach has supported the child's understanding of differences in others and helped them to embrace their own unique identity.

The manager and staff understand the importance of the child's family and friendship ties. Staff support the child to spend time with their family and friends. Staff warmly welcome family to the home. They support the child to spend time with friends in the community. Family members are positive about the support provided to the child. These connections support the child's identity and help them to build social relationships.

The child has been out of formal education for several years. The manager has advocated well to find suitable education arrangements. Staff encourage the child's attendance and emphasise the importance of attending. Although the child has not yet attended, the staff's approach shows the child is being encouraged to access education.

The home is decorated to a high standard throughout. It is furnished and resourced well to meet the needs of the child. The child's bedroom is decorated to a high standard and represents the child's personality.

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

Staff understand the child's vulnerabilities and the risks they face. Staff work with the child to help them understand the dangers posed by others. Regular key-work sessions take place with the child to support their understanding about their risks. The records of these discussions are detailed.

Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention. On one occasion, physical intervention has been used. This was proportionate and necessary to prevent the child from harm. The child was supported to talk about the events that led to the intervention and provided with aftercare.

Immediate action is taken to keep the child safe when there have been safeguarding concerns about staff practice. Concerns are shared with relevant professionals, and actions and outcomes are agreed. The child and professionals are kept up to date with developments.

The child's missing-from-home protocol is comprehensive. There are good references to places that the child may be when they go missing. Maps and addresses are provided, and known contacts and telephone numbers are recorded. This aids the staff in supporting the child's safe return.

Since moving in, the child has spent long periods away from the home at unknown locations. The manager has taken a multi-agency approach to discourage the child from going missing and support them to remain at the home. The manager collaborates with the local authority missing-from-care coordinator, the police, local authority and youth justice practitioners. Approaches to support the child are regularly discussed with professionals, and areas of further support for the child are implemented.

On each occasion the child has gone missing from the home, staff have followed the child's missing-from-care protocol. They search for the child and contact the relevant authorities. Creative attempts to encourage the child to return are used by staff. For example, they encourage the child to invite friends home and explore activities locally for the child to take part in. On occasion, this approach has supported the child to return home more promptly. When the child returns, they are welcomed warmly and encouraged to talk about the reason for the absence. However, there are incidents when the child has been missing that have not been recorded effectively by staff. This does not ensure effective oversight of these incidents.

Professionals said that the frequency and length the child is absent have significantly reduced since moving in. They said that when the child is missing, they remain in communication and meet them in the community. One professional said, 'I cannot fault the staff, they have gone above and beyond. They offer [name of child] so much, they support and involve all professionals and family. The manager and staff are exceptional; they know how to talk to [name of child] and engage them.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and qualified. She supports a culture of high expectations and aspirations for children. These characteristics are demonstrated in staff practice. The statement of purpose identifies a therapeutic approach to care, and the manager is taking steps to embed this in staff practice.

Staff are positive about the manager and the responsible individual. Staff have regular team meetings, which are reflective and support practice development. This provides staff with support for their roles.

The manager oversees the careful recruitment of staff. This includes necessary safer recruitment checks. Staff have well-thought-out inductions that are underpinned by the home's therapeutic ethos. All staff have completed the home's mandatory training, and the manager has identified plans with staff to build on their further development and progression.

Staff benefit from regular supervision sessions. These are child focused and provide opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice, discuss the care of children and review their learning and development needs.

The manager and staff understand the child's needs, their individual plan and their vulnerabilities. The manager and staff are committed to the child and support their progress. Professionals and family members speak highly of the support the manager and staff provide to the child and the effective communication.

The manager knows the service well and understands the strengths and areas of development. There are effective reviewing systems in place to ensure that leaders and managers review the quality of care provided.

The child's records and plans are detailed. However, aspects of the child's risk assessments contain inaccurate information about free-time arrangements, and some aspects are difficult to follow. This could lead to inconsistencies in how staff respond to the child and does not reflect current arrangements.

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 registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, ensure that missing-from-care incidents are recorded effectively.	10 July 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, ensure that all records are clear and detail the information in a concise and factual way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2807623

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Foundation Project Limited

Registered provider address: 15 Link Road, Rayleigh SS6 8AF

Responsible individual: Anthony McKenzie

Registered manager: Tara Eldred

Inspector

Syvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector

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