

2821457

Registered provider: Vita Spirit Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a small private company and provides care for up to four children with learning difficulties.

This is the home's first inspection. The home and the manager have been registered with Ofsted since February 2025. This inspection was brought forward due to the manager giving notice on their registration.

One child was living at the home at the time of the inspection. One child had recently moved on.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 May 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

Two children have moved in since the home was registered. When children move into the home, the manager works with other professionals to ensure that the most appropriate planning takes place. Staff welcome children to the home sensitively and do all they can to help to ease any anxieties they may have. Due to unfortunate circumstances, one child has moved out. The child currently living in the home is settled.

The home environment is warm and welcoming. Staff are supportive in embedding children's sensory needs into their care. The children have the freedom to personalise their bedroom to their taste. This helps them to develop a sense of permanence and belonging. In discussions with the child, they said, 'I like the home, I like the staff, its 100% here, it's the best, and the staff help me.'

Staff assist children to spend time with people who are important to them. The manager advocates for children and supports increased time spent with loved ones. In addition, staff help children to spend time with friends when it is appropriate to do so. This ensures that children maintain important relationships.

Children's care plans are up to date and appropriate for each child. Staff support children with their emotional well-being. Clear plans help to guide staff in how to care for children when they feel upset, worried or anxious. Staff can quickly identify when something is not right for a child.

Children are engaged in education on a full-time basis and are making lots of progress. Their attendance is excellent. The staff and managers work very closely with education colleagues. Because of this, staff and managers understand the areas to help children work on and strengthen, and they give children the support they need to make progress.

Staff support children to take their required medication. One child has regularly declined to take their medication, and staff recorded this appropriately. The manager sought advice from medical professionals in a timely manner about how refusal of medication could impact on the child, however, did not request bringing forward the looked after review, where there could have been multi-agency discussions. The manager acknowledges this shortfall, and that the refusal of medication may have negatively impacted on ending of the child's placement.

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

Positive behaviour is encouraged by staff. Staff use proactive techniques to help children to manage their frustrations and anxieties. Children respond to this approach. There has only been one incident of physical intervention, and this was used to keep the child and others safe. The manager ensured that the child was spoken to after the incident, so they understood why the hold was necessary.

The manager and staff use their skills and experience to manage incidents well. They are confident in setting boundaries and are consistent in their approach. Children have learnt to accept the boundaries due to the skilful approach of the staff. As a result, there is a calm and relaxed atmosphere which provides stability and safety for the child.

Staff work collaboratively with other professionals to understand children's complex needs. Managers and staff are strong advocates for children. The manager communicates well with relevant professionals to provide an all-round approach to children's care.

Safeguarding practice is effective. Staff receive safeguarding training that is specific to children's disabilities. Additionally, staff have a clear understanding of children's needs, vulnerabilities, and the potential risks they may be exposed to. Staff understand how to report and respond to any safeguarding concerns.

Leaders and managers conduct thorough assessments of children's needs before they move to the home. However, in one instance, a child's needs were not fully understood until their arrival. The large size of the home presented challenges to the child settling which resulted in them displaying behaviours that challenged staff. The unsuitability of the environment led to an abrupt end to the short time the child lived in the home. This had a negative impact on the child and their family.

Health and safety procedures, including fire arrangements, are safe. Staff and children participate in regular practice fire evacuations. Children have personal evacuation plans to help staff understand the level of support they require to evacuate the home safely.

Recruitment is safe. The manager ensures that all applicants are subject to thorough recruitment checks before they begin working in the home. This keeps children safe from unsuitable people having access to them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has given his notice to leave, however, is planning to work alongside the new manager to provide a robust handover. There is a core group of staff in place who provide consistency and stability for the children. They are committed and work well together. Staff said they feel supported by the manager.

Staff receive a wide range of mandatory and specialist training, which enables them to meet the complex needs of the children and supports their ongoing professional development.

Staff feel supported and have confidence in the manager. Staff benefit from regular supervision that supports discussions on the care and development of the children, alongside the day-to-day running of the home. Similarly, team meetings are well attended and provide further opportunities to discuss key aspects of the home's operations and care.

The home's statement of purpose has been completed by the manager, however, has not been sent to Ofsted within the expected timescale. This prevents the regulator from having oversight on staffing changes.

The independent visitor supplements the monitoring of the home. However, visits have not consistently adhered to regulations. The independent visitor has not provided their view on children being safeguarded, and there are factual inaccuracies in the report. Therefore, the current independent visitor's monitoring is an ineffective safeguarding measure.

Partnership working is a real strength. The manager and staff work well together and share information with parents, social workers and schools. One professional said, 'I have regular communication and regularly receive updates.' This effective communication improves children's experiences and development.

When staff experience challenging times, they are highly resilient. The management team recognises the importance of staff support. Further support mechanisms are put in place following any increase in behaviour that challenge. The manager ensures that there is open communication in the team, allowing all staff to raise concerns with confidence that are addressed seriously.

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 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; that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that moves in and out of the home are carefully considered and well supported in a planned way.	30 May 2025
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and	30 May 2025

notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b)) This is in relation to the manager ensuring that the statement of purpose is sent to Ofsted when changes in staffing occur.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) (4) (a)(b)) Leaders and managers must ensure the independent visitor visits monthly in line with regulations, provide their view on children being safeguarded, and ensure that there are no factual inaccuracies in the reports.	30 May 2025

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: 2821457

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Vita Spirit Limited

Registered provider address: 28 Rodney Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 2TQ

Responsible individual: Paul Boulton

Registered manager: Thomas Tindall

Inspectors

Jennifer Quest, Social Care Inspector

Matthew Morris Jones, Social Care Inspector

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