

SC014235

Registered provider: Lioncare Ltd operating as The Lioncare Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to 7 children who experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties. At the time of this inspection, 7 children were living in the home. The inspector spent time with all the children during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 25 February 2016.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 December 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: 19 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2024	Full	Outstanding
31/01/2024	Full	Good
20/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
02/06/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress and enjoying positive experiences. They have warm and nurturing relationships with staff. Children chat, laugh and engage positively with each other and with the staff caring for them. This creates a homely environment where children feel relaxed, valued and confident in their surroundings.

Children take part in group meetings and are encouraged to express their views about daily life in the home. This helps them understand each other's perspectives and supports them to live together rather than simply alongside one another, promoting empathy, understanding and mutual respect.

All children attend school. Four of the seven children attend the same specialist education provider, which strengthens partnership working and supports a consistent understanding of children's needs. Leaders and managers advocate strongly for children's educational progress, including ensuring that assessments are in place to secure the right provision for each child.

Managers ensure that children's basic and more complex health needs are responded to, advocating for specialist assessments where required, including in relation to neurodivergence, trauma and other learning and development needs. They recognise that children's needs change over time and take action to ensure support remains suitable. For one child, this included identifying that the existing therapeutic offer was not effective and advocating for a more creative therapeutic approach.

Moves into and out of the home are planned sensitively. The manager liaises with external professionals and communicates with all the children to ensure that moves are well understood, which helps reduce anxiety. Children are helped to mark their time at the home with leaving events and celebrations, which include photos and a book to celebrate their time living in the home. However, children are not involved in creating their memory books, which is a missed opportunity for them to identify the memories that mean the most to them.

Staff champion meaningful family time, including for children whose relatives live far away. They consider both the physical and emotional impact of family relationships and help children navigate bereavement and loss. This supports children's sense of identity and understanding of their personal history.

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

The managers and staff understand their safeguarding duties to keep children safe. They understand the areas of vulnerability and risk for each child.

The manager uses effective and collaborative approaches in sharing information and understands when to make referrals to partners, in line with their safeguarding and regulatory duties.

The children feel safe in the home and spontaneously seek support and affection from staff and managers.

The children know how to make complaints and are supported to understand their rights. No complaints have been received from inside or outside the home.

There have been no missing-from-home incidents since the last inspection. There are effective policies and plans in place to guide staff action should an incident occur. Risks around online safety and sexualised behaviour are well considered, with appropriate assessments in place to maximise children's safety in and out of the home. Staff recognise children's different development needs and ages and, when appropriate, support children to learn skills that help them keep themselves safe.

Incidents of physical restraint are monitored, and oversight by managers ensures that physical restraint is proportionate and only used when necessary. There has been a reduction in the use of physical restraint, with a sustained reduction in the last four months. However, records of physical intervention do not consistently demonstrate that learning takes place to ensure all agreed strategies are used to de-escalate incidents.

Children are spoken with after incidents, but these discussions do not consistently explore how the intervention felt for the child or the reasons staff used the hold. This limits opportunities for reflection and reduces the home's ability to maintain a curious, learning culture.

Some kitchen utensils are routinely locked away, without a clear rationale that this is necessary.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is aspirational and committed to the children and to maximising their potential now and for their future. Together with the deputy manager, they demonstrate a well-developed and restorative leadership approach.

The manager recognises that staffing pressures and issues of sufficiency have affected stability in the home. They have taken effective steps to address vacancies and recruit staff safely, with the support of teams within the wider organisation.

The culture in the home is in a state of change. In recent months, managers have identified areas for practice development in relation to ensuring that staff consistently deliver the therapeutic approaches set out in the home's statement of purpose. This is an ongoing challenge that managers are seeking to address.

To address some of the challenges in relation to staffing and to ensure that staff are being consistent in using therapeutic approaches, managers have adopted a hands-on approach to leading practice. This ensures that, in the short term, staff are supported and children are receiving good and consistent care.

Staff are confident that the home is safe. They enjoy their roles and feel supported by managers, who provide regular supervision. Staff report that training and induction equip them with the skills they need.

The home is undergoing redecoration and maintenance. Communal areas that have had work done are warm, comfortable and welcoming. However, children's bedrooms are not all as good. Some bedrooms are well decorated and personalised, reflecting children's individuality. In contrast, two children's bedrooms require urgent redecoration. The manager identified this several months ago but action has yet to be taken. This is due to systemic challenges, because managers are not able to effectively influence the work to ensure it is carried out in a timely fashion.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. In particular, when sharp knives and kitchen utensils are locked away, practice and the safety needs of children should be regularly reviewed to ensure this is necessary, the rationale is recorded in plans and institutional practice is avoided. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of their time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. In particular, ensure each child has a memory book containing photos, tickets and captions that provide context. Children should be actively involved in creating and updating their books to celebrate achievements and preserve positive memories of their time in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand and can meet each child's needs, in line with their responsibilities. In particular, ensure that individual care and behaviour plans and records of supervisions are consistently outcome focused and include specific, measurable, realistic, relevant and timebound objectives, to support consistent practice and facilitate effective monitoring. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

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: SC014235

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lioncare Ltd operating as The Lioncare Group

Registered provider address: Lioncare House, 58a Livingstone Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 3WL

Responsible individual: Matthew Vince

Registered manager: Sarah Jackson

Inspector

Ashley Arkless, Social Care Inspector

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