

SC042147

Registered provider: Child First Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider owns and operates this home. According to the statement of purpose, the home uses a care model that provides love and care for up to six children between the ages of eight and 18 who may have experienced early childhood trauma.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2024 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

In this report, the staff are referred to as 'adults', which is the term that is used in the home.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 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: 16 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2024	Full	Good
01/08/2023	Full	Good
18/01/2023	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who live in the home are loved and receive high-quality care, making them feel valued and cared for. One young person said, 'They are more than a care home; they are my family.'

Children engage in meaningful conversations with adults about their interests, and they are supported and encouraged to participate in activities such as dance and cadets, which broadens their social skills and boosts their confidence.

Adults support and encourage children to access health appointments. Adults help children understand their emotions and mental health needs through caring and empathetic discussions. Adults communicate well with specialist health professionals to ensure consistent and safe approaches for children when they are struggling with their mental health.

Children's moves into and out of the home are well planned. Keeping in touch with children is the norm, and adults speak fondly about the children who no longer live in the home. The manager has good oversight of plans to ensure that the needs of children moving into the home are carefully considered alongside the needs of the children already living in the home.

Not all of the children attend education, but the manager and deputy manager advocate strongly and consistently for each child's educational requirements, and they encourage exploring alternative routes to accessing education where appropriate. For one child, advocating for a change in transport to and from college has resulted in improved attendance since she is more comfortable travelling to the setting.

When appropriate, adults encourage children to maintain positive relationships with their families. Adults support children in seeing their families, and families are invited to visit the home when it is appropriate.

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

Children who go missing from home are supported to return safely by adults who show care and concern. Adults liaise with the family and professionals during this time and ensure that missing-from-home processes are followed and children are located and returned home as quickly as possible. When adults speak to children, either while they are missing or after they have returned home, they do so with warmth, kindness and concern to help them understand the risks to themselves and make it clear that they are cared for.

Adults provide an excellent level of support to children who harm themselves. They respond to children with compassion and consideration, prioritising their safety. Adults

help children develop their understanding of the risks associated with self-harm by having reflective discussions. There have been some significant incidents that have resulted in the manager challenging the risk assessments of other professionals to ensure that they accurately reflect current risks and have a plan to help keep the child safe. This is reflected in their own risk assessments.

Adults support children who are anxious and upset by using techniques that work for each child, such as humour, allowing the child time and space to think and providing consistency in responses. This is supported with effective and well-written plans that clearly outline the individual needs of the child. Incidents are reported in a timely manner to the wider professional network.

Children rarely need to be held. Adults use alternative methods to work with children. They focus on building positive relationships and have regular, honest conversations with children. There has only been one occasion when a child has been held since the last inspection. This was proportionate and necessary, and it is recorded well. However, there was a lack of support provided for the child immediately afterwards, with an adult only speaking to her about it the following afternoon.

Adults understand the children's vulnerabilities and have a thorough knowledge of how to keep them safe. Adults manage risk skilfully, providing a rapid response to keep children safe. Risk assessments are comprehensive, providing well-considered safety plans for adults to follow. However, for one child, the risk assessments had not been reviewed in a timely manner in line with the statement of purpose.

Significant incidents and allegations made against adults working in the home are reported effectively to the professional network and the local authority designated officer. However, there have been a small number of incidents that have not been notified to the regulator, and reports do not always include the level of detail required to accurately reflect the actions taken to keep the child safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager understands the children and takes a calm and focused approach. She is well respected by children and adults in the home, as well as the professionals she works alongside.

Leaders and managers understand the children's needs and advocate passionately for their best interests and wishes. They frequently liaise with the child's network to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved. Professionals compliment adults for their excellent communication.

Adults working in the home are provided with an excellent level of support through regular and effective supervision in both individual and group environments. Reflection is a key aspect of their support journey, which encourages conversations that consider a wider view of incidents and a more considered approach moving forward. This can be seen throughout the recording of the work they carry out with children.

Adults receive a comprehensive induction and training. When new needs arise that require specialist training, this is arranged at the earliest opportunity. The manager is keen to ensure that adults have opportunities to access training on a regular basis.

The manager is keen to listen to children's views, and children approach her regularly for discussions and to raise ideas. This has recently led to an outdoor room being improved to make it a safe and welcoming sensory space for the children to use.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that risk assessments for all children are updated regularly.	29 July 2025
A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b)) In particular, ensure that good-quality notifications are completed following serious incidents and they reflect the actions taken to address the risk.	29 July 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the development of safe, stable and secure relationships with adults in the home is central to the ethos of the home; therefore, following a serious incident, children should always be supported, and their whereabouts and emotional well-being should be known. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

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: SC042147

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Child First Limited

Registered provider address: 62 The Street, Rustington, Littlehampton BN16 3NR

Responsible individual: Matthew Langley

Registered manager: Francesca Scotland

Inspector

Faye McCarthy, Social Care Inspector

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