

SC055153

Registered provider: Thunderbolt Mobile Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is owned by a private organisation that provides activity-based intervention for up to three children who may be experiencing a period of difficulty or crisis.

At the time of the inspection, three children were accessing the service using a broad beam boat, a house, and also a short-term accommodation house.

There is a manager in post who has been registered since August 2024.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 January 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
17/11/2021	Full	Good
14/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager and staff document the children's journeys. This demonstrates the positive impact that living at the home has had on individual children's progress.

Children have positive and trusting relationships with staff, who are positive role models. Children feel listened to, and staff ensure that children know how to raise a concern or complaint. Children said that if they had any worries or concerns, they could talk to staff and they would help them.

Children make progress with their individual education plans. One child has started college after completing their exams. Two children who did not attend school before living at the home now have good attendance and are engaging positively with their education.

Children are supported to spend time with those who are important to them in line with their agreed plans. Staff support family time by taking children to see their family or by supporting children's families to visit them at their home. This ensures that children can maintain relationships with those who may live some distance away.

Staff encourage children to take part in meaningful activities which enhance their skills and resilience as well as providing them with new opportunities and hobbies. Children are supported to build age-appropriate friendships, and this helps to give them a sense of identity and allows them to spend time with peers.

Staff support children to attend routine health appointments and specialist well-being support is sourced from the internal therapy team, when needed. The therapist also attends team meetings to share information and guidance with staff to help them support children's individual needs.

When children are new to the home they are supported to move into the home as sensitively as possible, taking into consideration their individual circumstances. The manager and staff complete suitability assessments before children move into the home to make sure the home and staff team can meet their needs. This means there is a child-centred approach to deciding whether the home is suitable for the child.

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

There have been no safeguarding concerns or worries since the last inspection. Staff spoken to were able to accurately explain the action they would take should they be alerted to an allegation or witness a concern of abuse. Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding.

Plans and assessments are robust and detailed documents which are regularly updated and provide clear guidance and strategies for staff to follow to provide consistency of care to children and to help reduce the risk of harm.

There has been no occasion when physical intervention has been required. This demonstrates that behaviour support strategies and training are effective alongside the respectful relationships that staff and children share.

Staff take suitable action when children have been missing from the home. Staff work with external agencies and families to support children to return home quickly and safely. Children receive a return home interview from an independent person following their return and the manager completes an evaluation of each incident.

Staff conduct regular direct work sessions with children. These are often planned around key topics but are also completed reactively when needed in response to incidents, behaviours or relevant events. These support children to have the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe and to explore their emotions safely.

Children receive help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings safely through the staff team and the therapy team. Staff understand children's experiences, respond with appropriate boundaries and seek to understand triggers for behaviour. One parent said: 'My child is thriving since living at the home. They can now manage their emotions and are finding their own identity.'

Due to the nature of the service, children often move around and stay in different types of accommodation. However, one child has been settled in a house for over a year and they take pride in their home. There has been significant damage caused by damp in the house. The issue causing the damp has now been rectified; however, the damaged area has not been suitably redecorated.

The manager has not ensured that there are suitable processes in place to assess the suitability of the location of short-term accommodation for children. In addition, there is no evidence to confirm that the properties used for short-term accommodation factor in health and safety requirements such as annual electricity checks and gas safety checks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is an experienced manager in post who is supported by a deputy manager. Staff spoken to describe the management team as supportive and always available for advice and guidance.

Leaders and managers use internal and external monitoring of the home effectively and have an ambitious vision of the development they want to achieve, alongside an understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to take effective action when required. However, the quality of care review is not always completed within timescales and does not include the feedback and opinions of children

about the home, its facilities and the care they receive. In addition, some records are handwritten and illegible, which means that it is not always possible to monitor these records.

The manager knows the children well and acts as an advocate to ensure that the child's voice is heard and that decisions made by the placing authority regarding children's care and their futures are in their best interests.

There is a stable and consistent staff team whose members support children to feel a sense of belonging and permanence. They work well with external professionals, such as the placing authority, therapy team and school to ensure that there is a wraparound approach to support the best outcomes for children.

Team meetings are well attended, and staff understand the value of these meetings. They are an opportunity for the team to meet and share information, review support strategies for children and to use the knowledge of the therapy team.

Staff have their fitness to complete the role appraised every year. They also take part in regular supervision sessions; however, supervision sessions are mainly used to share information about children, the team and training rather than focusing on specific areas of staff practice and reflecting how staff are influencing the children.

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 review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that they complete a review of the suitability of premises used for children. In addition, they must also have suitable arrangements in place to ensure they are satisfied with the health and safety requirements of the properties.	7 March 2025
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a	7 March 2025

result of the quality of care review (“the quality of care review report”). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))	7 March 2025

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the home is decorated and maintained to an acceptable standard and that any damage or wear and tear is quickly addressed and rectified.	
--	--

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording, ensuring that handwritten records are legible. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered manager should ensure that staff supervision sessions are practice-related and focus on supporting staff to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: SC055153

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Thunderbolt Mobile Limited

Registered provider address: 158/160 Birkrig, Digmoor Parade, Skelmersdale,
Lancashire WN8 9HP

Responsible individual: Michael Fletcher

Registered manager: Michael McCann

Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025