

SC059717

Registered provider: Five Rivers Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home operates across two houses, caring for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties. It is run by a national private organisation. At the time of inspection, four children were living in the home. Three of them had lived there since before the last inspection. The inspector spoke with all four children.

There has been a change in manager since the last inspection. The new manager registered with Ofsted in June 2025.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 September 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/09/2024	Full	Good
28/09/2023	Full	Good
17/08/2022	Full	Good
09/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

All children are making progress and enjoying positive experiences. The older children participate in individual and shared activities, including an enjoyable holiday abroad this year. The younger child enjoys outings tailored to their needs, such as local fetes, gardens and attractions, supporting their sensory needs and community connection.

The home consists of two neighbouring houses, which are not internally connected and operate separately. One younger child lives in one house, receiving individualised care in line with their assessed needs. Three teenage children live in the other house and have lived together for several years. All confidently describe it as their home. The homes reflect the children living in them, with photos of them and certificates celebrating their individual achievements. There is age-appropriate equipment, including in the gardens, with spaces to relax or play outside. The houses are homely. Children's bedrooms are well decorated, reflecting their individuality, interests and stages of independence. However, a broken bedframe in one child's bedroom had not been suitably repaired, and the child believed they would need to pay for a replacement. This was not the manager's intention, which highlighted a need for clearer communication. The responsible individual took immediate action to replace the bed and provided guidance for the future and apologised to the child.

Children are well supported in their education and health needs. The manager is proactive, promoting strong communication and collaborative engagement with professionals to address challenges. One child, whose difficulties had significantly disrupted their school attendance, has successfully returned to school through coordinated efforts involving the team around the child and the internal therapeutic team.

Children's milestones and birthdays are celebrated with parties and activities that convey the staff's pride in the children. One child preparing to move to semi-independent living has a celebratory meal planned. Staff are proud of another child's joining ceremony at a club. These actions support children's confidence and self-esteem.

The children do not have memory books to document key dates, personal growth and lived experiences in the home. Staff contribute to communication books, however, only some entries reflect emotion and pride. Others focus on routine and lack meaningful reflection, limiting their value in helping children understand their time in the home.

The manager actively promotes safe and supportive family relationships, including facilitating travel for children to visit family members who live far away. Families recognise this commitment and feel well supported and informed.

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

The home's ethos centres on nurturing, trauma-informed care for children affected by adverse childhood experiences. Managers, staff and the therapeutic team work collaboratively, grounding care in empathy, motivation and activity-based approaches.

Of the three older children, one has experienced a single incident of physical restraint since the last inspection, which was proportionate and necessary to prevent harm. The younger child has experienced a higher number of physical restraints, which are proportionate and necessary. Risks were documented before they moved in, and staff have received appropriate training. Individual plans guide the safe and appropriate use of physical interventions. Incidents are subject to robust oversight by the manager and responsible individual. They remain reflective and committed to learning from incidents to reduce and, where possible, eliminate the need for physical restraint.

One child has made a high number of complaints against staff. The manager and responsible individual have responded robustly, including making referrals to the local authority designated officer, communicating with the child's social worker and notifying the regulator. Staff work with other professionals, including the therapeutic team, to help them understand how to keep the child safe.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home and one child has moved out. Support for both moves included activities that promoted positive endings and new beginnings. However, the move from the home was not underpinned by clear planning, limiting the opportunity for contingency strategies, reflection and adjustments to schedules. The child moving into the home had previously been cared for within the same provider group. This facilitated a well-informed and needs-led transition, supported by familiar staff who continued to provide care in the new setting. One child expressed excitement about their upcoming move to semi-independent living. In conversation they conveyed self-awareness and articulate the support received from staff in preparation for the move. The child understands what is happening, feels consulted in decision-making and has a written schedule to support their understanding.

The staff understand the action to take when children go missing and follow the clear policy in place. They understand their safeguarding responsibilities and act quickly, following plans to involve the police and local authority, and have managerial oversight. Following incidents, there is tenacity in securing return home discussions, with escalation by the responsible individual to ensure compliance. However, staff do not always have the opportunity to speak about the incidents to reflect on what happened and to identify learning. One incident involving the police was not notified to Ofsted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Children and staff have been well supported by leaders and the therapeutic team following the sudden and unexpected management changes in the home. Leaders acted swiftly to appoint an experienced manager through internal secondment, recognising the urgent need for support and stability. The manager has worked hard to establish

themselves, using an empathetic leadership style to navigate the emotionally fragile nature of the home.

Workforce sufficiency and stability remain a concern due to recruitment and retention difficulties. While managers acknowledge sector wide pressures and internal changes, it means there has not been a stable staff team to support children. In addition, staff do not receive regular supervision and are not involved in planning team meetings. This limits opportunities to support staff experiencing empathy fatigue and low morale, further contributing to the instability of the workforce.

Children engage positively with preferred staff, but both they and staff recognise workforce instability. Managers acknowledge the emotional impact, with some children hesitant to form relationships that risk being short lived. Information is now displayed to help children understand who is present in the home each day, however, this remains a reactive measure and highlights the lack of consistent continuity of care.

Managers demonstrate awareness of many, though not all, areas for development in the home. The challenges and impact on the registered manager's capacity in operating the home across two separate houses are recognised and documented by the responsible individual. Plans to address this are being progressed within the organisation.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(d)(e)(h)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure there is thorough oversight of all incidents in the home, including speaking with staff to support their development and the manager's understanding of care in the home. In addition, ensure there is a clear plan with measurable timescales to support the implementation of approved changes to the home, avoiding drift or delay.	29 September 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees—	25 August 2025

undertake appropriate continuing professional development;
receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.
(Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))

In particular, the registered person must ensure the frequency of supervision is routinely planned and delivered in line with good practice expectations and in accordance with the home's statement of purpose.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff keep appropriate memorabilia of children's time living in the home. Staff should ensure they provide context to the photos that are included in memory books so that children are helped to remember where they were, what they were doing and who they were with when they look back at the photos in later life. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure all areas of the home requiring maintenance are be addressed promptly to ensure decor reflects a consistent, welcoming environment, with any damaged furniture repaired or replaced swiftly to maintain both safety and a homely feel. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.25)

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: SC059717

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Five Rivers Child Care Limited

Registered provider address: Five Rivers Childcare, 47 Bedwin Street, Salisbury SP1 3UT

Responsible individual: Timothy-John Matthews

Registered manager: Peter Butchers

Inspector

Ashley Arkless, Social Care Inspector

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