

SC064027

Registered provider: Delam Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children, aged from eight to 18 years old, who have complex learning disabilities.

A manager was appointed in April 2021. The manager has applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 September 2021

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: 4 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2020	Full	Outstanding
15/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
20/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/12/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Managers and staff know the children well. Staff provide individualised care and support to meet children's needs. Parents are happy with the care provided for their children, with one parent saying that they do a 'brilliant job'. As a result, children receive support and care that keeps them safe and supports their development.

Children are very happy at the home. During the inspection, the inspector observed positive interactions between staff and the children. Staff are attentive to the needs of each child. Therefore, children develop trusting and secure relationships with managers and staff, which enables them to thrive.

The progress of the children is recognised and celebrated. For example, managers and staff identify a 'star of the week'. Important events are also celebrated, such as Eid. An in-house prom was organised to celebrate the ending of school, and children enjoyed this. This has a positive impact on the child's sense of identity and self-esteem of the children.

Managers and staff recognise and promote education. Children at the home are in full-time education and have good attendance. Overall, professionals were positive about the support and communication by managers and staff. This supports the children to achieve positive educational outcomes.

Staff support children to stay in contact with important people in their lives. One child has just been on holiday with family and staff, providing them with a positive experience. Managers and staff are creative and where face-to-face contact cannot take place, an alternative approach is taken. This supports children in developing their identify and maintaining important relationships.

In general, managers encourage children to develop their independence skills. More recently, one child has become more able to complete tasks independently, and now cooks for others at the home. Also, another child no longer requires the use of reins when in the community. The manager's vision is to continue to support the children in developing their independence skills. Therefore, children are supported to take appropriate steps towards independence.

When a child recently left the home, managers and staff did not prepare the child for the transition. Although there was an abrupt ending to her placement, managers and staff made attempts to say goodbye. However, the child did not have an opportunity to visit her next placement and no work was undertaken with the child to support her in gaining independence before she moved to semi-independent living. As a result, the child was inadequately prepared for her move to semi-independent living.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's risks and behaviours. The manager has implemented risk assessments that provide staff with guidance on how to support and respond to the children. These have been developed over the last six months. As well as risk assessments, there are communication passports which provide detailed information about the children. As a result, managers and staff are informed on how to keep the children safe.

When a child has complex health needs, a number of measures are in place to ensure the child's safety. The manager ensures that updates relating to the child are communicated to staff in a timely manner. This provides staff with the information they need to respond to the health needs of children and keep them safe.

Staff complete key-work sessions with children that support them in progressing and understanding risks. Staff talk to children about family relationships, emotions, bullying and behaviour. The sessions are completed using communication aids that meet the individual needs of the child. This helps children to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Incidents of physical intervention are proportionate and appropriate records are written. When a concern was raised about whether a physical intervention was required, managers acted on this promptly. They completed an investigation to ensure that this measure was used appropriately, and concluded that it was. This demonstrated that managers respond to concerns about the safety of children.

The home is undergoing maintenance work and improvements have been made to the children's bedrooms to make these more personalised. The manager has involved the children in this, for example asking what colours the children would like in their rooms. Despite developments, the physical environment requires maintenance in certain areas. For example, there were two places where the floor presented a tripping hazard. While the manager had raised these as concerns, these were not responded to in a timely way. During the inspection these tripping hazards were made safer, but this was a temporary fix. If not rectified permanently, these hazards could have an impact on the safety of the children.

The managers have not always ensured that safer recruitment procedures are in place. For one member of staff there was no evidence to suggest that previous employment with children has been verified. For two members of staff there was no evidence that original documents had been verified. While other recruitment checks are compliant with safer recruitment, these shortfalls do not ensure that staff are suitably vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager of the home has a positive vision for the children. Since being in post, the manager has been proactive in making changes to support the development of the children and staff. Practice is child centered and the manager has high expectations for what the children can achieve.

The manager has a number of monitoring tools in place that enable them to review the home, the staff's performance and the progress of the children. This information is then considered in development plans for the home, and actions are formed. This allows continuing improvements to be made to the home and the quality of care children receive.

Staff feel supported by the management team, who they described as 'approachable'. This demonstrates positive working relationships between managers and staff.

The managers support the staff team through regular supervisions and training. Staff undertake a wide variety of training courses that are up to date. When staff are not up to date, the manager has responded by using supervision to address this and making plans to support staff to complete their training. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who have had appropriate training to care for them.

The inspector spoke with professionals and parents, who were positive about the manager and staff. Overall, they shared that the needs of the children were met and that the managers and staff had positive relationships with the children.

There are staff vacancies and as a result the manager has used agency members of staff on shift. To overcome the staffing difficulties, a recruitment drive has recently taken place. The manager ensures that agency staff are inducted into the home, and consideration is given to the skills and experience of the agency staff. When agency staff are on shift, the manager ensures that there are a number of permanent staff on duty in order to reduce the impact on the children.

On one occasion, the manager did not liaise with the local authority to update the delegated-authority document for a child. As a result, the document does not delegate authority to the current manager. This could lead to professionals making decisions for the child when they do not have the authority to do so.

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, 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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home— if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) In particular, the registered manager is to ensure that photographic ID is verified, and that where a person has previously worked with children, verification of the reason why they left their previous employment with children, as far as reasonably practicable, is completed.	17 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that the health and safety legislations are met. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person must help each child to prepare for any moves from the home. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and

personal self-care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

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: SC064027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Delam Care Limited

Registered provider address: Metropolitan House, 5th Floor, 3 Darkes Lane,
Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Sarah Fiedorowicz

Inspector

Melanie Griffin, Social Care Inspector

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