

SC065780

Registered provider: Milestones Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered to provide care for up to three children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2015.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 July 2022

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: 5 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/06/2019	Full	Good
03/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently two children living in this home. Children are cared for by staff who know them well and staff have a good understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities. The inspector observed warm and familiar relationships between children and staff. Staff were confident in talking about the progress children have made living in this home.

Children are able to personalise their bedrooms to their own individual tastes. The home environment is comfortable and homely. However, the internal doors have locks on them, which detracts from the otherwise domestic feel of the home and could prevent children from having access to all areas of their home.

Children told the inspector that they are able to do activities they enjoy such as bowling, trampolining and going for walks. Equally, children enjoy spending time in the home with staff watching films or doing crafts.

Children make good progress with their education while living in this home. One child has recently completed their GCSE examinations with plans to start at college next term. One child has recently moved into the home and the registered manager is working with relevant professionals to support their transition back to school after the summer break.

Staff support children to attend routine medical appointments and liaise with relevant health professionals to ensure that children's health needs are met. One child is engaging with therapeutic services to support their emotional well-being. One child takes regular medication, and she was able to confidently explain the importance of this to the inspector.

Children have been supported well by the registered manager and staff team when moving into, and on from, this home. One child's social worker told the inspector that the child's move to the home 'was planned really well, it was relaxed, not rushed, and this was beneficial for the child'. The child who has recently moved to the home told the inspector she was able to visit before moving in and felt 'relieved' after this visit.

Children living in this home know how to make a complaint, although none have been made since the last inspection. Both children told the inspector they would be able to talk to staff or the registered manager about any worries they have and they know these would be taken seriously.

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

Individual risk management plans assess a range of risks associated with each child's behaviour. They provide staff with guidance on how to manage and minimise

these risks. Risk management plans are reviewed regularly and updated with recent information. Both children living in this home spoke to the inspector during the visit and said that they feel safe living in the home.

Staff work closely with external professionals to manage specific risks to children. Multi-agency plans in place for children are regularly reviewed, so that staff can respond effectively. Where there are concerns for children's safety, staff offer children emotional support and monitor them closely, with room searches undertaken to ensure that any items that may cause harm to children are removed.

Physical intervention has not been necessary to manage children's behaviour. Individual behaviour support plans identify the behaviours children may display and the strategies staff are to use to support children. Staff use rewards to reinforce positive behaviours and have introduced a 'Star of the Month' incentive to further encourage this. As a result, sanctions are rarely used.

There are plans in place that outline the procedure staff are to follow should children go missing from the home. When incidents have occurred, staff have taken appropriate action to report and locate children. However, for one child, the plan was not clear how often staff should have contact with the child when in the community, or when they should begin the process of reporting the child as missing to the police. Furthermore, not all staff working in the home were clear on the action they should take.

Safe recruitment procedures are in place for new staff. This means that children are protected from unsuitable adults being employed to work in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is an experienced and suitably qualified registered manager in post. She is approachable, child centred and knows the children well.

Staff receive regular supervision and told the inspector that they feel supported in their role. Appraisals have been undertaken, although they do not include feedback from children or other professionals. This is a missed opportunity for the registered manager to use feedback to further improve the quality of care within the home.

Staff have undertaken a range of training, including training in relation to the specific needs of children living in this home. Team meetings take place monthly and provide a further opportunity for staff to reflect on their training and practice. Staff told the inspector that this helps to ensure that they are providing consistent care for children.

The registered manager has completed a review of the quality of care which identifies actions to improve the home. However, this report would benefit from more evaluation and analysis in order to drive forward improvements in the quality of care provided to children.

There are a number of staff vacancies that the registered manager is attempting to recruit to. Core staff are currently being supported by staff from the organisation's other home and no agency staff have been used. This ensures that children are cared for by people they are familiar with.

External professionals were positive about the home and the care children receive. They said they receive regular updates and that communication from the registered manager and staff is good.

The registered manager must ensure that the home's rotas clearly record the staff on shift and the actual hours worked in the home. This will ensure that there are accurate records kept, should there be any safeguarding concerns raised in the future.

The registered manager has not secured consent for the use of door sensors for one of the children living in the home, as required by regulation.

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 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, the registered person must ensure that children's missing from home plans include clear strategies for staff to use to manage and reduce risk.	7 September 2022
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d))	7 September 2022

In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home has sufficient experienced and qualified staff to care for children.	
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(ii)(iii)(iv)) The registered manager must ensure that children have access to all areas of their home.	7 September 2022
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the staff duty roster is clear and includes all persons working at the home at any time and the actual hours worked.	7 September 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure they gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing for each child living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person should ensure that staff appraisals take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: SC065780

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Milestones Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 32 Fieldway, Maghull, Liverpool, Lancashire L31 5NB

Responsible individual: Mark Armstrong

Registered manager: Nina Howarth

Inspector

Genevieve O'Reilly, Social Care Inspector

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