

SC066560

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides support, assessment and therapeutic intervention for children in need of short-, medium- and long-term care packages.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 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	requires improvement to be 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: 1 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/09/2019	Full	Good
12/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, staff have worked hard to encourage children's attendance in education and support them to value the benefits that learning brings. One child is now successfully engaged in post-16 training, and one child attends school regularly. Another child's attendance has begun to improve, due to continuous efforts from staff to motivate them through incentives. However, this improvement needs to embed to ensure that the child's outcomes are not compromised. As a result, a requirement made at the last inspection is restated.

Children are understood well by staff and are treated as individuals. Since the last inspection, one child has grown in confidence. This has been underpinned through staff supporting them to participate in a local youth group and encouraging their talent in music. The child's social worker commenting on this progress said, 'She has taken real steps forward.'

Children's arrangements to see their families are fully supported by staff. Professionals were complimentary with regards to the positive effects that this support has on the children's sense of identity.

Staff encourage children to make age-appropriate and incremental steps towards becoming independent. Children learn a variety of skills they will need in adulthood.

Children are regularly consulted about their care, and a child spoken to said they felt listened to by the staff. Over time, children begin to trust staff and become more confident and open in sharing their thoughts and feelings.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection, there have not been any complaints or allegations made against the staff or the home. Staff are effective at responding to children's emotional needs and presentation. As such, they have been able to effectively de-escalate incidents at an early stage and there have not been any incidents that require staff to use restraint.

The number of incidents of missing from home are extremely low. When incidents do occur, staff respond appropriately and in line with children's reporting procedures.

Staff plan children's activities well. This ensures that children who are subject to court-restricted curfews benefit from social and educational time while adhering to the limitations that are in place.

Staff have not always spoken to children when they have been involved in incidents that have occurred in the home. As a result, there are missed opportunities to provide timely advice and support to children.

Since the last inspection, staff have increased their efforts in speaking to children about the risks associated with drug misuse. However, one child continues to use cannabis. The impact of staff intervention has not been fully evaluated, nor has it been reviewed to consider how staff might improve the efficacy of this work.

One child, in line with local authority agreement and plans, can spend long periods of time out of the home when not in training or education. Risk assessments do not offer advice or instruction to staff of how these times are to be managed. As a result, staff do not record their checks on the child's welfare or assure themselves that he remains safe. Staff knowledge of the child's whereabouts, or who he is with, is vague. A requirement is made in respect of assessing and reducing risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is enthusiastic and committed to improving the outcomes for children living at the home. She understands their plans and individual needs. Professionals spoke highly of staff and the manager, and of the collaborative approach that is taken to meeting children's needs.

Staff receive regular and well-recorded supervision, and they meet as a team on a monthly basis. These meetings are child-focused and seek to drive improvements in the quality of care for children.

Staff also have access to a wide variety of training that is complemented with regular access to and discussions with the home's therapist.

Since the last inspection, the manager has increased and improved the level of monitoring of how staff work with children. This has led to a decrease in incidents in the home. However, the timing of some reviews results in delay by the manager in advising staff of the need for additional work. A requirement is made in respect of this.

Recordings made by staff are not always accurate. For example, some information on children's progress documents is recorded as an incident when it is a direct-work session. This reduces managerial oversight and does not provide an accurate overview.

The staff team is stable, and the majority of staff are qualified.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child overcome any such barriers. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)) This particularly relates to staff supporting children to return to and participate in education on a regular basis.	30 June 2022
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)) This particularly relates to staff assuring themselves that children are safe when away from the home and any checks carried out are clearly recorded. This also relates to staff evaluating and reviewing the impact that drug and alcohol work has on children's behaviour.	31 May 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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)) This specifically relates to the registered person monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of work with children in a timely way.	31 May 2022
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff make accurate and comprehensive records of their work with children. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC066560

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, Lancashire
OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Karen Brandon

Registered manager: Emma Fletcher

Inspector

Pauline Yates, Social Care Inspector

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