

SC362965

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 is run by a private company that operates several children's homes in the region. It provides care for one child who experiences social and emotional difficulties. The child living at the home was living there at the time of the last full inspection.

The registered manager, who oversaw the home from February 2014 to May 2024, has left. Their successor, after an induction, started as manager in July 2024. However, this employment ended within the probationary period in October 2024. The current interim manager has been in post since November 2024 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Consistent with the home's ethos, staff are referred to as adults in this report.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 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

requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: 29 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2023	Full	Good
05/12/2022	Full	Good
17/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child is making progress and having positive experiences. They have enjoyed holidays, celebrations and a variety of outings and events. The child is supported in activities such as swimming, visiting local parks, and taking their dolls on walks in their pram.

The child's bedroom has been beautifully redecorated and refurnished the child has been involved in decisions, especially selecting the cuddly character duvet set. The child enjoys playing in the large garden, which has a sizeable climbing frame and other play equipment. Additionally, the summer house provides a cosy, year-round space that is used for play, therapy sessions and sometimes meals.

The adults provide compassionate, empathetic and nurturing care, and they are developing positive relationships with the child. The adults undergo trauma-informed training tailored to the home's ethos. A specialist clinician carries out weekly sessions to help the adults to reflect on incidents and examine team-wide learning and development to improve the consistency and application of training in practice.

The child's health needs are well addressed through routine appointments and added specialist therapeutic support from the home's clinician in weekly sessions. The adults support the child's development. For example, they help the child to acquire independence skills, such as participating in meal preparation and planning, while also engaging the child in age-appropriate discussions on adolescence. Additionally, the adults plan and encourage regressive play, recognising the child's behaviours in the context of their differing developmental stages.

The adults champion the importance of educational attendance and have high aspirations for the child, proudly celebrating their achievements. The adults attend meetings, and there is now effective daily communication between the home and school. They support the child's substantial daily commute from home to the specialist provision, ensuring that the child has sustained full-time education. However, the lengthy commute has become increasingly unsustainable for the child, who is often tired and reluctant to make the car journeys. This has affected the child's trips out and family time. Although the adults will support friendships made in school, the child is unable to form friendships that cross their school and home environments. These issues are well understood by the managers and have influenced the transition planning.

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

The leaders and managers demonstrate understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They adhere to established safeguarding policies, ensuring appropriate notification to required professionals. Safer recruitment practices are followed. There

have been no complaints from the child, no incidents of them going missing and no issues of exploitation. Appropriate safeguards are in place to address these concerns.

The organisation has robust processes to thoroughly and promptly investigate allegations against adults in the home. Investigations are well documented, with any delays noted, and their outcomes are appropriate and promote safe practices. However, the investigation reports do not consistently record wider learning and action, such as when a manager fails to provide regular reflective supervision.

The adults provide nurturing, trauma-informed care that recognises all behaviours as expressions of the child's feelings and emotions, with the aim of helping the child to feel safe. When incidents occur, the adults respond with understanding and take steps to reassure the child through positive reconnection, avoiding responses that could induce shame or blame.

When adults have used physical restraint, this has been proportionate and necessary, aimed at preventing harm to the child. The management has oversight of these incidents, and body maps are used to document details informatively. While discussions take place with the child and adults following an incident, some lack curiosity, reflection and learning. The managers are addressing these issues through additional support, training and mentoring.

The managers have addressed issues of poor cleanliness, alongside other issues, through written expectations to adults. They also recognise the need for further home environment and maintenance improvements. While these changes affect the home's aesthetics, they do not pose risks to the child. Given the child's planned transition out of the home, it is appropriate to avoid subjecting them to unnecessary changes.

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

The home does not currently have a registered manager. However, there is an experienced manager in post, which is an interim arrangement approaching its second month while recruitment activity is carried out.

Since the last inspection, there has been significant change; the deputy manager and the registered manager left their positions for unrelated reasons having given notice only two weeks apart. The negative impact to the stability for the child and the team was anticipated by the leaders as the manager had been in post for 10 years. Swift action was taken to advertise and recruit to the manager's position. An induction with handover between managers was carried out.

The leaders and managers ensured oversight and auditing, noting the changes in the home and identified failures of management. For example, regular and reflective supervision has not been provided, adults have not received appropriate support and training in their roles, and training requirements have not been met. The manager's employment did not progress beyond the probation period.

The child's needs are reflected in plans. However, the varied quality and length of these plans can limit their effectiveness as working documents. The child's engagement and views are not captured effectively in plans and they do not have an advocate, despite this being recognised.

The action by senior leaders did not mitigate the lack of effective or efficient management in the home, despite several issues being identified. Therefore, the overall performance and workforce sufficiency were affected. The leaders, manager and adults, the social worker and other professionals all acknowledge how this unsettled the child.

The leaders and managers know there is still significant work to be done. However, some areas where they felt progress was being made still require attention. For instance, a lunch planning error had the potential to cause conflict and disrupt the child's day. Furthermore, adults had neglected to follow systems intended to oversee hygiene tasks for two months, indicating a lack of oversight and raising question of their purpose.

The leadership team has taken proactive steps to drive positive change, including increasing the number of responsible individual employees to provide greater support to managers and seconding a practice support manager. The development plans are now receiving the necessary direction and momentum.

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— 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 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that training is completed within mandatory time scales. Additionally, the registered person must promptly address the actions and improvements to maintain sufficient and consistent standards of care.	22 March 2025
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;	1 March 2025

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—

ensure that staff—

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that children's plans are effective working documents that support their development and adults' actions. Furthermore, children's views should inform plans and be captured in them. Finally, where relevant, plans should be recorded in a way that enables a child to understand their needs and goals.

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: SC362965

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Five Rivers Child Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Timothy-John Matthews

Registered manager: Gemma Hatch

Inspector

Ashley Arkless, Social Care Inspector

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