

SC411030

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private provider, and it provides care for three children with emotional and/or social difficulties.

Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 June 2024

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: 11 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2023	Full	Good
04/04/2022	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved into the home. The process of considering children's needs took into consideration the views of in-house therapists as recommended at the last inspection. This provides a sound basis for placements to get off to a good start.

Three children have moved on since the last inspection. One child went to live at another of the company's homes due to a safeguarding issue.

A second child moved to a specialised placement, and a third moved into foster care in line with their local authority plan. Children were supported during these moves, and staff continue to keep in touch with some of them.

There is an age gap of several years between the two children who live at the home. The length of time they have been at the home differs, as does their level of maturity in terms of physical, emotional and psychological development.

The competing needs that emerge because of these differences are managed well. Staff are helping the older child to prepare for adult life. They encourage their academic ambitions and facilitate part-time working. With support, the child is afforded greater independence in making choices about contact with family, socialising and keeping healthy.

Staff are equally adept at supporting the younger child, working closely with professionals to overcome barriers to school attendance, re-establishing age-appropriate boundaries and engaging in playful activities.

As a result, children have positive experiences at the home and are making progress across all aspects of their development. They benefit from well-planned care from staff who are committed to giving them the best possible chances of success.

Effective therapeutic support helps children to understand and overcome the challenges they face in their lives. This intervention is delivered in a way that suits children's needs and levels of understanding. As a result, it makes a difference to their lives. For instance, children are now beginning to discuss their feelings of loss and bereavement, to reflect on family relationships and to consider the impact of the choices they make.

Children have opportunities to have formal and informal conversations with staff about their feelings and needs, and the 'moans and groans' about living at the home. Staff give credence to these views, and on one occasion, they assisted a child to make a formal complaint to the regulator. The child was satisfied with the outcome.

The support that children are given to explore and practice their faith is a strength of the home, as is the work done to maintain positive relationships with people who are important to them.

The manager has fulfilled a recommendation from the last inspection to make improvements to the home. Children now enjoy a comfortable, well-furnished and well-maintained environment, large enough for communal activities or private space should children so wish.

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

Children are protected from harm because the manager supports staff to identify and manage known and likely risks to children. This is accomplished through effective supervisory support, safeguarding training and reflecting on incidents that have occurred at the home. This was a requirement made at the last inspection that is now met.

Risk management plans are regularly reviewed and updated. However, on one occasion, the level of an identified risk had not been agreed by the placing authority. The plan to reduce the risk was unworkable and not evaluated. This did not negatively affect the child, as other strong safeguarding measures were in place. However, it represents a missed opportunity to work more closely in partnership with others in agreeing to types and levels of risk and being able to respond with more practical strategies. A recommendation is raised to further improve practice in this area.

Staff are alert to the risk of children going missing from the home and, in such situations, take effective action to keep children safe. Consequently, these incidents are reducing.

Children's behaviour is well managed by staff. Staff act as positive role models and provide children with fair and clear boundaries and expectations. Staff understand that children will test boundaries, but this is managed in a way that encourages children to reflect on and think about their choices. As a result, the use of consequences is infrequent, and physical holds are rarely used. Where this has been necessary, records show that interventions are appropriate and used for the shortest possible amount of time.

Children's health is protected because staff ensure that their medication is stored safely and is correctly administered. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that only those who are suitable to work with vulnerable children are employed at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager ensures that the home fulfils its statement of purpose and meets the needs of individual children effectively, providing them with every opportunity to succeed.

Children make progress because staff receive the support and training that they need to deliver consistent, nurturing care. The organisation's therapeutic team helps staff to understand children's emotional and psychological needs, and how to respond to them. Staff also have the opportunity to discuss their practice and explore their own emotional responses and how these can impact on the care they provide. This is a clear strength of the home.

Children benefit from the staff team being a mixture of experience, age, gender and diversity. New staff bring valuable skills from their previous employment. They are quickly adapting to the role and say that the training and support have been excellent, helping to equip them with the competences they need to care for children.

The manager maintains good oversight of the running of the home through a range of quality assurance processes. These are used effectively to maintain good standards of care in the home. Internal monitoring is further strengthened by the scrutiny of an independent visitor whose monthly visits promote improvement.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Specifically, ensure that risk management plans are agreed with the placing authority and that strategies to manage identified risks are evaluated for effectiveness. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: SC411030

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Katie Knox

Registered manager: Jade Walsh

Inspector

Stella Henderson, Social Care Inspector

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