

SC429995

Registered provider: A Significant Other Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager at the home since 7 August 2023. The interim manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. Inspectors met all three children and spoke to two of them.

The home has a separate annex on the grounds, which is being used by one child.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 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: 6 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/07/2023	Full	Good
25/01/2023	Full	Good
08/09/2021	Full	Good
10/10/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive nurturing care from staff who know them well. Most children have lived at the home for several years. This provides the children with a sense of stability and helps them to develop trusting relationships.

When a new child moves into the home, the manager creates a clear introduction plan for the child. One child's social worker said, 'The move was phenomenal for what [name of child] needed and [name of child] was actually excited to move to the home.' This has helped the child to settle in and begin to develop relationships with staff and children.

However, the manager and senior leaders made the decision that one child could move into the home whose needs are outside those detailed in the statement of purpose. This means that the home is not complying with the conditions of registration approved by Ofsted.

Staff treat children with dignity and respect. Staff adopt a therapeutic approach and use non-stigmatising language when they speak to or write about children. Staff sensitively encourage children to learn new skills to care for themselves.

Most children have good school attendance. Some children have benefited from reduced timetables, which has helped them to re-engage in their education setting. One child has increased their attendance at school in the short time that they have lived at the home. Staff maintain communication with the staff at the child's education setting. One professional commented that the child's behaviour in education has improved since living at this home.

Staff support children to lead healthy lifestyles. This includes attending routine medical appointments and being physically active. Furthermore, children are supported to engage with specialist services that help to improve their emotional well-being.

Staff understand the importance of family ties and help children to stay connected with the people who are important to them. This includes children who live outside of their local area and are a distance from their hometown. This support from staff helps children to maintain relationships, broadens children's networks and helps to develop future support.

Children engage in a range of activities, often as a group, but they also enjoy individual time with staff. Staff take photos of special events and use diaries to write positive affirmations and comments about the occasions. Children take these diaries with them when they leave the home. This provides positive memories of their time in the home.

The provider has invested in the decoration and repair of the property inside and out. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their choice and show each child's personality

and interests. However, children's bedrooms appear unkempt and untidy with the children's personal belongings not cared for. This is a missed opportunity to help children to develop independence skills that they can use in adulthood.

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

Children say that they feel safe living at the home. They can identify staff members who they would turn to for help. This shows children that staff care about them and increases children's ability to ask for support.

Children's individual risk assessments are detailed and updated regularly. They identify risks and what actions staff should take to help children. Some of the risk assessments are carried out with the input of the home's psychology team. Children's past trauma and experiences are considered to formulate how best to meet their needs.

Children who go missing from the home receive a well-coordinated and thorough response to ensure their safe return. When children are missing from home for a continuous period or refuse to return to the home, staff work diligently to keep in touch with the child and liaise with safeguarding services. This persistent approach has resulted in children returning to a safe environment and being able to report concerns about their experience while they were away from the home.

Allegations are taken seriously and investigated. The manager refers incidents to the local authority designated officer and the child's placing authority. This helps to ensure that the children are cared for by safe adults.

Positive behaviour is promoted in the home. Children understand the rules and boundaries of the home and feel that they are fair. Children receive verbal praise and rewards in recognition of their behaviour. As a result, behavioural incidents and the use of physical intervention are rare.

Staff have discussions with children about issues that are specific to their needs and risks. These educative conversations are effective and help children to understand risks.

Fire safety procedures are not followed. In the main house, fire extinguishers are locked in a cupboard under the stairs without a current risk assessment to justify this decision. Additionally, a fire risk assessment for the annex was carried out after a child had moved in. This increases the risk to children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was previously the deputy manager of the home. This has ensured that there has been stability in the management oversight for the children and staff. The manager knows the children well, and she understands staff's strengths and areas for development. She has a focus on staff's welfare to ensure that staff can provide the best possible care to children.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervision. Additionally, staff meetings take place monthly. Children's safety and well-being are a focus of the meetings and updates and strategies are discussed. The manager uses this forum to highlight good practice and challenge when processes have not been followed. This provides consistency and helps to drive forward high standards and the quality of care that children receive.

The manager and staff build relationships and communicate with professionals and family members. They provide positive feedback about the care that children receive and the progress they make. One professional described the child's progress as 'phenomenal' since moving into the home.

The manager has good oversight and monitoring of the home and of the children's files. The manager's audit of children's files identified some statutory documents have not been received from the child's placing authority. This means that the manager cannot be assured that staff are following the most up-to-date plans. Furthermore, although requests have been made to receive any missing information, there is no system in place to escalate the request made. This means that there is a lack of action from the child's placing authority.

The manager carries out a quality of care review every six months. However, since the last inspection, these reports have not been shared with Ofsted in a timely manner. This prevents the regulator from having oversight of the provider. This issue has been resolved as the manager was aware of this shortfall and the administrative error.

The manager welcomes the oversight from the independent visitor. The visits take place monthly, and reports are consistently shared with Ofsted. However, the quality of the reports lacks consultation and views of children, parents and professionals. This undermines the manager's ability to use this process to make changes in the home.

The manager carries out a locality risk assessment, which is reviewed regularly. The assessment includes information from relevant professionals. It identifies risks and what staff need to do to keep children safe in the community. However, it does not include any positive features and community resources that children can access. This is a missed opportunity to help children to engage in community activities.

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
A person registered under this Part may apply to the registration authority— for the variation or removal of any condition for the time being in force in relation to the registration. An application under subsection (1) shall be made in such manner and state such particulars as may be prescribed and, if made under paragraph (a) or (c) of that subsection, shall be accompanied by a fee of the prescribed amount. (Care Standards Act 2000 Section 15 (1)(a) (3))	30 June 2024
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	12 July 2024
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c)(d))	12 July 2024
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23	12 July 2024

(duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b))	12 July 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another home or adult care, or to live independently. In particular, staff should support children to develop skills to care for their own belongings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- The registered person should ensure that the manager reviews the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and positive features and services available in the community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that quality of care review reports is sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority of all children in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

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: SC429995

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Significant Other Limited

Registered provider address: 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

Responsible individual: Simon Morson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

Tenji Wesa, Social Care Inspector

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