

SC453372

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to five children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The inspectors spoke with two children during the inspection. One child provided written feedback.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2021.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 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: 2 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/07/2019	Full	Good
24/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The appointment of a new manager has improved all aspects of the home. Children's experiences have improved, and they are making good progress. One child scored living in the home as 10 out of 10. They said: 'It's not like a residential home. It's like we are all one big family living together.'

Children enjoy a range of home-based activities that appeal to their individual interests, with the staff. Staff take the children on outings and activities in the community. In addition, the staff support the children to join clubs so that they can pursue their chosen hobbies. This provides the children with opportunities to socialise in their wider community and to broaden their experiences.

Key-work sessions are regular and focused on the child's individual needs and targets. Key-work sessions have been adapted following the children's request to make them less formal, demonstrating that the staff value the children's input. This helps to show the children that their views are important, that they are listened to and acted on.

Children's health needs are well met. The manager liaises with mental health professionals to gain valuable input in relation to the children's more complex needs. The manager uses this to create bespoke healthcare plans to meet the children's individual needs.

The children make progress in their education due to the manager and the staff's commitment. Staff transport the children to and from school, even when this involves lengthy car journeys, to maintain the child's education provision. Children have good attendance and are making progress. When children are not in education, employment or training, the manager advocates well on the child's behalf. This ensures that alternative education plans are in place.

The home has recently been redecorated and is furnished to a good standard. The improvements made make it a much more inviting environment for the children to spend time in. However, none of the children have lockable cabinets in their bedroom. This means that the children cannot store their personal items securely in their own bedroom.

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

Children said that they feel safe living in the home, and they can identify the staff that they can speak to if they have any worries. The manager ensures that the appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed when incidents occur. Clear safety plans are then implemented to reduce the risk of incidents reoccurring.

When there is the possibility of new risks emerging in the local community, a prompt referral is made to the relevant service. This ensures that the children receive any additional support that they may require. Children are educated to help them understand the potential risks, and to minimise these risks, as the staff are creative in the work that they do with the children. This helps the children to raise their knowledge and awareness about potential risks, thus empowering them to become increasingly safe.

Staff respond quickly when children go missing from the home, and they make persistent attempts to locate the children themselves. Staff talk to the children about their experiences of going missing from the home, and they use this information to attempt to understand and reduce the risks that the children face.

Safer recruitment processes are followed, and the appropriate checks are made prior to staff working with the children. This helps to ensure the children's safety.

Children's records, including impact risk assessments and risk assessments, are well written and easy to understand. They include a clear plan on how the identified risks will be reduced. However, a serious incident has occurred in the home as one member of staff did not follow a child's risk assessment. The management team acknowledges that if the child's risk assessment had been followed, then this incident would not have happened. In addition, the manager has failed to update all of the children's risk assessments to reflect this incident. This shortfall means that the staff do not have an accurate understanding of the risk, which potentially leaves the children at risk.

Alarms are fitted to the children's bedroom doors, which are used as a safeguarding measure. However, the manager has not obtained permission from the children's placing local authorities for this use of surveillance. This means that the appropriate written permission is not in place for this practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a permanent, suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. Feedback from the children and the staff about the manager is overwhelmingly positive. Staff who have worked in the home for some time can clearly identify the progress that has been made since the manager's appointment. Staff feel supported and clearer about their roles and responsibilities.

The manager enjoys positive relationships with the children, and she has a good insight into their needs. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and she is willing to challenge other professionals to continually improve the care provided to the children.

The manager prioritises the supervision and training needs of her staff. Reflective supervision takes place regularly, which allows the staff to consider their own practice and make any necessary changes. Most staff have completed the provider's mandatory training, and those that have not are booked on to future dates. Staff have completed training that is specific to the individual needs of the children.

Where specific training has not taken place, the manager has taken steps to secure this.

The manager has developed systems to monitor the effectiveness of the home and the performance of staff. She uses these processes to scrutinise the practice of the staff, and to make effective changes when she identifies shortfalls.

Complaints are taken seriously and are dealt with promptly. There is an internal post box so that the children can choose to share their views with or without staff support, as they wish. When complaints are raised, the manager keeps those who have complained informed throughout this process. She derives learning from complaints to identify how the staff can improve their practice, and to raise the standard of care that the children receive.

Children's records are of a good standard. Bespoke care plans detail the children's preferences and the support that is most helpful to them. Child-friendly versions of care planning documents help children to understand the expectations and rules, which helps them to settle quickly into the home. However, two separate examples were identified with contradictory information. This means that the children's records are not helpful for them to read and understand their experiences and progress, as some of the records are not credible.

Children are supported to learn that there are consequences for their behaviour. However, shortfalls in the manager's oversight of the consequence log have been identified. The home's consequence log does not always include the specifics of the sanction imposed. In addition, the manager does not consider the effectiveness of such practice and there is often no timeframe included as to how long the measure is in place. This means that it is not made clear to the children what they can expect.

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; and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities and follow the children's written risk assessments.	25 June 2022
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(b))	25 June 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(vii)) This specifically relates to sanction records.	25 June 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children are provided with appropriate furniture, including a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('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: SC453372

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Responsible individual: Richard Parker

Registered manager: Sally Britton

Inspectors

Paula Shepherd, Social Care Inspector

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

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