

SC480655

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned and operated home. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children with a range of emotional and social difficulties.

The home is led by registered manager.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 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: 6 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/10/2021	Full	Good
17/02/2020	Full	Good
21/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
31/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are receiving good care from staff who know them well. One child said, 'The staff are like friends and I feel able to talk to them.' The staff provide children with the reassurance and comfort that they need to help them enjoy their lives and make progress.

The children are making good progress in many areas of their development. Staff recognise children's achievements, no matter what these are. However, the recording of this could be improved. This would enable managers and staff to track children's progress. Additionally, it would assist with care planning process and keeping children on a progress trajectory.

Children are well supported to engage in education. The staff liaise effectively with education providers when children do not attend school. This helps to ensure that children have consistent access to education and learning. One child spoke about her future aspirations in education, and how staff encourage and support this.

The home is warm and welcoming. Children's bedrooms are personalised and decorated to a high standard. All areas of the home are well maintained. This provides children with a comfortable home that they can be proud of.

Children are supported and enabled by staff to share their wishes, feelings and views within planned and unplanned key-work sessions. Children's meetings do not yet have the structure to engage children in discussions about improvements in the home or planning activities for them to enjoy. This is a missed opportunity to fully engage the children in matters affecting their daily lives.

When children move in to the home or leave, staff members do not always consider the matching of children. Staff are not guided by detailed plans about how they should support a child remaining in the home when a new child arrives. Additionally, planning could be improved in relation to those children moving from the home. There are plans to improve this area, but these plans are not yet embedded. This has resulted in children not always feeling safe and supported.

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

The staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. Staff have a good understanding of the actions they need to take to keep children safe. The individual support and safeguarding plans for children are thorough and detailed. The children have been involved in the development of these plans. This means that they understand what staff are trying to achieve. Consequently, children are safer and risk-taking behaviours have reduced.

Children rarely go missing from care. When they do go missing, staff members follow established protocols to return children home quickly and safely. Staff members ensure that information is shared with relevant external safeguarding agencies. This means that there is a robust multi-agency response when children go missing from care.

New staff coming to work at the home have access to an induction and training programme to prepare them to work with the children. However, a member of staff commented that the induction programme was poor and did not prepare them for the role. Leaders and managers have developed a new training programme, but this is not yet embedded. Staff training in safeguarding children takes place on a regular basis. This training is reinforced through staff supervision and management oversight of safeguarding practice.

Children have been settled, and physical intervention is a rare occurrence. When physical intervention has taken place, children have been supported with a key-work session the same day. The subsequent reports lack detail, which impacts on reflection for children and staff members.

Children are safer because of the rigorous vetting and checking of prospective new staff. The pre-employment vetting of staff is thorough and likely to deter unsuitable adults from seeking employment to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager understands the individual needs of children. An external professional commented, 'The manager has been amazing, and communication is very good.' This supports partnership working to help keep children safe and help them to make progress.

Staff feel supported by the manager. Additionally, the staff support each other well. This provides consistency in approaches to care. There has been lack of support for the manager from senior leaders, and supervision of the manager is inconsistent. This is now beginning to improve.

Professional supervision between the manager and staff remains inconsistent. As a result, staff members do not always have the opportunity to reflect on their practice with a manager. The manager is aware of this being an area for improvement and has plans to make changes.

The manager's oversight is good. The manager employs a systemic approach to quality assurance. The manager reviews all incident reports and key-working sessions carried out with children. The manager's learning that is derived from reviews of care practice is then utilised in team development to improve care practice. This means that reflection on care practice leads to changes and improvements in the quality of care provided.

Team meetings are not yet fully effective. Managers and staff discuss approaches to caring for the children in meetings and identify additional support that children may require. The follow-on action and implementation of this support is not always clear. This has the potential to cause confusion and important actions to be missed as a result.

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 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's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) This relates specifically to staff members' experience, gaps in training, and the effectiveness of team meetings. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	27 January 2023
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.	27 January 2023

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)) This specifically relates to the admission and discharge of children and how matching is considered to meet children’s needs.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to regular and reflective supervision for all staff members in line with the statement of purpose. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	27 January 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home’s care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child’s cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.11)

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: SC480655

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Registered provider address: Edison Education Ltd, Lyme Vale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands, Stoke-on-trent ST4 6NW

Responsible individual: Hilary Jones

Registered manager: Amanda Addlesee

Inspector

Kathryn Hurley, Social Care Inspector

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