

SC482872

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 by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children who have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2023

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: 14 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2021	Full	Good
20/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/12/2019	Full	Good
19/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's moves into and on from the home are carefully managed to make them as positive as possible. One child moved out a year before this inspection. Visits are arranged and children choose items to create a comfortable, personalised bedroom. The rural location provides suitable outdoor space with a garden and a paddock where children can visit the resident donkey and pony. The house is of a good decorative standard and a maintenance team ensures that any repairs are addressed promptly.

Two children are currently living in the home. They are comfortable and have a sense of belonging. Both children are receiving the care and support they need and are making progress having lived in the home for over a year. The manager and two senior members of staff provide a consistent core team and are supported by newer care staff. The strength of relationships enables the children to talk and laugh with the adults who care for them. One child described the home as 'amazing'. A social worker said that the child is cared for well and is safe while at the home. A parent said that they cannot fault the quality of care provided and added, 'They go above and beyond.'

After a long absence from full-time education, a child is now attending school full time and is enjoying the social and academic opportunities. The manager liaises well with both children's schools. When there are difficulties, strategies and resources known to support the children in the home are shared with school staff.

Children are in good physical health and do not need any regular medication. They are helped to attend routine health appointments, and arrangements are made when children require some emotional support. The involvement of a counsellor, employed by the organisation, ensures that children and staff can readily access therapeutic support.

Children enjoy pursuing their interests and attend local clubs, including a gym and performing arts school. Memories are captured well for the children to have now and in the future. Written records are made alongside photos of activities and significant events, including the summer holiday to Disneyland Paris.

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

Staff are aware of the measures they need to take to keep children safe. They are suitably trained and understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff know what action to take in the event of an allegation or safeguarding concern. Since September 2021, there have been five allegations against adults working in the home. One of these was upheld, which was in relation to a child being inappropriately restrained by an agency worker in December 2021. A member of the

care team immediately intervened to safeguard the child. The agency staff member was sent home and the child has not experienced being restrained since.

Transparent and thorough investigations are carried out following safeguarding concerns or complaints. Senior managers carry out analysis and consider if there are any lessons to be learned to inform any changes to practice or training requirements.

Records confirm that, since December 2021, any use of restraint is to prevent a child from harming themselves or others. Records provide a clear account as to what happened and why. The manager has good oversight of these records and ensures that children have an opportunity to reflect after an incident.

When three children lived in this home, children went missing on two occasions and one child experienced being bullied. These behaviours have not reoccurred in the last year as the two children who live here now generally get on with each other. At times, when one child is upset, staff provide support to enable children to co-exist and follow their own interests. Children report that the staff 'sort things out' when there are difficulties for them.

Risk management is documented well in assessments that are regularly reviewed and updated. Two omissions were noted where a review had not adjusted the level or risk where it should be either raised or lowered.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff talk very positively about the manager and the support that they receive from her. Having been the deputy manager before taking this role, she has a good understanding of the children's needs and the operation of the home. An application has been made to Ofsted, and the manager is waiting for an interview.

Regular supervision is valued by staff, who use it as an opportunity to talk about their work and review their practice. A comprehensive training programme equips the team with the relevant knowledge and skills. The current deputy was supported into her role with a two-week induction into the management tasks. Having been a senior staff member, this level of commitment to professional development by the organisation is very positive towards the retention and value of staff members.

The manager and staff team have good working relationships with partner agencies. Professionals provided positive feedback around the level of communication from the home. Records and reports are shared with family members and professionals. Children are encouraged to contribute to records, and staff ensure that their wishes and feelings are captured. Daily journals record important moments and progress; however, they also record mundane daily routines. Such information is not of any value in helping children to understand their life now or in the future. The quality and content of the journals require a review.

Senior leaders have introduced some research-informed practice that is making a positive difference to children and contributing towards their progress. A programme of exercise and movement, negating the need for medication, can be delivered to support areas of childhood development that may have been fractured or broken in the child's early years. Professional support and assessment have been employed to administer this programme.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. In particular, adjust the level of risk when reviewing documents and remove if the risk is no longer a concern. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's records relating to each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. In particular, review the daily journals to ensure that the information recorded is useful to the children now and when they access these records in the future. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: SC482872

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Fairfield Lodge, Evenwood Gate, Evenwood, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 9NH

Responsible individual: Ruth Parker

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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