

1274672

Registered provider: Harmony Childrens Services

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 company. It provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional, and/or learning difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 4 August 2021.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 November 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 18 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/10/2022	Full	Good
29/09/2021	Full	Good
04/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children's progress and experience of living in this home are exceptional. They continue to make excellent progress in all areas of their development. This is because the children receive care and support from a nurturing and dedicated staff team. The standard of care that the children receive is excellent and mirrors that provided by a good parent.

Children continue to make excellent progress in school. The registered manager advocates on their behalf during meetings to get what the children need to develop their learning. Consequently, children's attendance and attitude to learning has improved, and the children are more resilient in the classroom. An education professional said, 'In the early days [child's name] was coming to school as it was their safe place, but now they are coming to school to learn as their safe place is with staff at the home.'

One child has been subject to a significant loss in their life. Through research-informed practice, the staff are supporting the child to cope better through this traumatic time in their life. The child is managing their emotions exceptionally well due to the consistent love and support from the dedicated staff. In addition, the registered manager has sourced a relevant professional to further support the child, who is also available for staff, to help them to provide exceptional care to the child.

The children living at the home are healthy and staff support them to attend their routine medical appointments. Staff carry out key-work sessions with children around key health issues, including healthy eating and managing emotions. This helps the children to understand their health and well-being. In turn, this helps the children to consider their long-term health and well-being needs.

The children are provided with a memory book when they leave the home. Photos show the children with big smiles on their faces with staff during activities. This enables the children to revisit their happy memories during the time that they lived at the home and with the staff who provided their care. One child and a member of the staff took part in a sponsored run and raised money for a cancer charity. This gives the child a sense of achievement and pride.

Staff support the children to see their families as the staff know how important this is. The registered manager has listened to the wishes and views of one child's feelings around family time, and she has shared these with the child's social worker. This child now has overnight stays at their parents' house. In addition, one child and their sibling have enjoyed a holiday with the staff. This means that the children are spending time with those who mean the most to them.

The home is welcoming and feels homely. The children's bedrooms are personalised with their belongings and photos of their family. Nevertheless, one child's bedroom floor has burn marks caused by a lighter. The registered manager was quick to respond to this, and new flooring has been ordered. Furthermore, an area in the outside space is unkempt and limits the children's opportunity to play outside.

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

The children respond well to the structure and clear boundaries from the staff. The registered manager and staff know the children exceptionally well and are attuned to the children's individual needs. Staff notice subtle changes in the children's mood or presentation, and they mitigate any potential for disruption before it escalates. The children experience improved emotional stability and learn to self-regulate their emotions. Consequently, their behaviours continue to improve.

The children are kept safe inside of the home and in the community due to the protection and intervention of staff. The individualised risk management plans provide the staff with clear guidance on how to manage the children's potential risks and behaviours. The registered manager scrutinises and regularly reviews these plans to keep them up to date and relevant. The trusting relationships that the children have with the registered manager and the staff enable the children to be open and honest. Staff help the children to manage their vulnerabilities and make the right choices.

There has been one missing-from-home incident since the last inspection. This is a significant reduction, and is exceptional progress for the child. During the time of the missing-from-home incident, the staff worked closely with the police and the child's parent. This ensured that the child was located as quickly and safely as possible. When home, the child was offered an independent return-home interview. This helps the child to realise that the adults around them care.

Staff use low-level restrictive practice as a last resort to keep one child safe. These incidents are well recorded and are in line with regulation. The child and staff are debriefed following the incidents. This helps all involved to learn from the incident.

The registered manager has a zero tolerance to bullying. Staff discuss any concerning behaviours with the children in a way that is non-blaming to the child. This helps children to understand whether they are being bullied or doing the bullying. The staff's immediate action minimises any negative outcomes for the children.

New staff are recruited safely, and appropriate checks are carried out. There are no concerns in relation to safer recruitment practices. This helps to ensure that the children are looked after by people who are safe to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is highly respected by the staff and other professionals. She has a hands-on approach and has created a culture where there are high aspirations for the children to succeed in life. This has embedded a positive culture in the home that provides the children with a safe and secure home environment where they flourish.

The registered manager is a powerful advocate for the children and will challenge other professionals effectively to get what the children deserve and what is right for them. As a result, one child remains living in the home. The social worker said that the registered manager fought for what was right for the child at that time and this was the right decision.

Staff receive high levels of support and encouragement from the registered manager. This includes regular supervision sessions and team meetings. During these meetings, the registered manager encourages ongoing reflection and discusses research-based practice. This ensures that the staff have the relevant knowledge and are up to date with the children's changing needs. The staff team provides a high standard of care that is extremely child-centred.

The registered manager is aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. The meticulous monitoring systems in place help the leaders and managers to highlight any shortfalls. This enables the registered manager to act on these without delay, which ensures that the service evolves to meet the children's needs.

Communication between the registered manager, children's social workers, and children's family is excellent. This integrated approach to meeting the children's needs is improved by the input from specialist agencies, such as bereavement counselling services and other professionals. Consequently, the children are able to freely explore their thoughts and feelings, and they feel comfortable with the staff around them.

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

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is an environment that meets the needs of their children, and that the children have access to a well-maintained garden and that any damage in the home is repaired or replaced without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 1274672

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Childrens Services

Registered provider address: 3 Park Square, Leeds LS1 2NE

Responsible individual: Mark Raw

Registered manager: Deborah Jagger

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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