

SC461450

Registered provider: Harmony Childrens Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is privately owned. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and may have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living at this home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2021.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/01/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Good
19/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, the same three children have benefited from the stability of living in this home. Children say they feel happy. They have good relationships with the staff, who provide them with care and support in line with their individual plans.

Overall, children make good progress because they receive care and support that is tailored to their individual needs. They benefit from clear and supportive structures and routines. One placing social worker said,

'During the time [name of child] has lived at the home, he has benefited from the nurturing care provided. This has enabled him to understand and manage his emotions, as well as providing him with stability and a sense of belonging.'

Children are consulted about the care and support they receive. Children feel able to share their views, wishes and anything else that they may be worried about with staff. This is because they feel that staff listen to them, encourage them to achieve their very best and provide them with the support they need. However, the children are prevented from fully engaging in compiling their own individual care plans. This is because these documents are lengthy and held on the home's computer. The manager recognises this, and she is in the process of developing a child-friendly care plan.

Staff recognise the importance of education for each child, and they actively promote engagement for all children. When children are not attending school consistently, the manager and staff work in partnership with education providers to address this and seek positive solutions. This means that children are supported with their education, including those who previously had minimal education attendance.

Children are supported with their physical and emotional health. Staff are trained and understand the protocol they must follow in the event of a child requiring prescribed medication. Children are registered with community healthcare professionals. When the children are unable to attend their appointments, the staff ensure that more appointments are made available to them.

Children are encouraged and supported to follow and develop a range of interests and leisure pursuits. These include going to the cinema, going swimming and taking part in trampolining sessions. There are also games consoles and activities in the home that the children enjoy.

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

One child is preparing to move into another home, as despite the staff's best efforts, they are unable to keep the child safe from escalating risks. The child has made a request to move out of the area to enable them to make a fresh start. The manager, staff and the child's placing authority have supported this, and together they have implemented a robust risk-management plan to mitigate the risks during the interim period.

All children have detailed risk-management plans in place. These outline individual risks and the measures in place to reduce and manage them. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their role and responsibility in supporting children. Staff spend time speaking with children during children's meetings and key-work sessions. These discussions help children to understand what may present a risk to them and what actions they can take so they can become increasingly safe.

Staff support the children to manage their behaviours through clear and consistent boundaries. The staff are aware of the potential triggers that might aggravate the children's behaviour, and they use de-escalation techniques to help the children to calm down and manage their emotions and behaviours well. Restorative practice helps children to reflect on and understand the outcomes of their behaviour. As a result, consequences are minimal, and children say they are fair.

There have been some incidents of one child going missing from the home. Staff follow the agreed strategies to support the child to return to the home safely. Following any incidents of children going missing from the home, an independent return home interview is conducted to establish any trends, patterns or reasons for the child leaving the home. This enables staff to understand the concerns or issues the child has, so they can take appropriate action to address them.

The provider follows safer recruitment and selection procedures to do all they can to ensure that the people employed are suitable to work with children.

The home is well maintained. However, during the inspection, a fire door leading into the kitchen was propped open. This does not adhere to the fire regulations and could present a risk to children and staff in the event of a fire. The manager addressed this immediately.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably qualified, experienced and child-centred manager in post. She provides good leadership to staff, and she has high aspirations for children. Since the manager has been in post, she has continued to implement a number of changes to improve the overall outcomes for children.

The home has a core staff team in place. However, there have been occasions when agency staff have been required. The organisation uses one agency to minimise the

number of different agency staff. However, during the past 12 months, this has not always been the case. This is an area the manager is addressing, and a recruitment campaign is ongoing. This will ensure the home has a consistent staff team to meet the needs of the children, minimising the need to use agency staff.

Staff receive regular supervision sessions on a formal basis. Staff also commented that they felt able to seek additional support and guidance from the manager at any time to further underpin their skills and knowledge. While annual appraisals are also completed with the staff, these do not include the views of the children.

All staff undertake the provider's mandatory training within the agreed timescales. The manager also uses team meetings to provide additional training and support to further enhance and underpin the staff's practice.

Since the last inspection, the manager has improved the details within the children's individual risk management plans to make them more robust. She also now ensures that children are spoken with after a physical intervention so that they can share their experiences and views.

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
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>paragraph (1) does not apply; and</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that designated fire doors remain closed so that they are effective in the event of a fire.</p>	14 April 2024
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) required the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must consider patterns and trends in relation to the turnover of staff and ensure that children are cared for by a stable staff team.</p>	1 May 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the view of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged to see the home's records as 'living documents', supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

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: SC461450

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: Yolanda McInnes

Inspector

Sarah Oldham, Social Care Inspector

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