

1252023

Registered provider: Tjunction Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a small private provider. This is the home's first inspection since being registered in June 2017.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 October 2017

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children are happy in this home and make good progress from their starting points.
- Children's wishes and feelings are fundamental to the staff. Staff provide opportunities for children to make decisions. Staff listen to children and take them seriously.
- Staff have warm and nurturing relationships with children that help children to feel safe, secure and cared for.
- Education is important, so staff help children to attend and achieve.
- The diverse and skilled staff team is passionate about providing children with good care and positive experiences. Consequently, children build resilience and grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has a good development plan to address identified shortfalls.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Written risk assessments do not address all identified risks for children.
- Safeguarding concerns are not well documented.
- Not all staff hold a first aid qualification. This means that currently some shifts are not covered with a member of staff who is first aid qualified.
- Children who are not in education do not have a well-planned timetable for completing educational activities.
- The monitoring of incidents has not identified potential safeguarding concerns.

Recent inspection history

This is the home's first inspection since being registered in June 2017.

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
<p>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—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure written risk assessments take account of all identified risks for each young person to ensure these are reduced or eliminated.</p>	30/11/2017
<p>Ensure that the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect provides for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response; describe the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect; and describe how and to whom staff are to report, without delay, any concern about abuse or neglect of a child. (Regulation 34(2)(d)(e)and(f))</p>	30/11/2017

Recommendations

- At least one person on duty at any given time in a children's home must have a suitable first aid qualification (regulation 31(2)(a)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.13)
- When children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28,

paragraph 5.15)

- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in this home. For example, in a previous placement a child had regularly gone missing, assaulted staff and been restrained. He has not gone missing since moving to this home and has had few incidents. His mum said: 'He feels like it is his home. I also feel this.' Children are all very positive about the home. They feel that it is an excellent place to live. They advocated strongly during the inspection for a judgement of 'outstanding'. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the inspection process and had a mature conversation about the judgement. This demonstrates the loyalty and commitment that the children have to the staff and the home.

Children are happy. They feel cared for. A child said: 'They look after us well.' Her social worker said: 'The staff are all really committed to her, and she feels that.' Children say that they will talk to staff if they feel unhappy about anything. Children have very open and direct conversations with staff. Staff are equally open, responding honestly and positively. For example, topics of conversation during the inspection included sex, diversity, health and respect. Staff do not shy away from difficult conversations with children. A commissioner said: 'He gets on well with staff and is able to talk to them about anything.' This means children are able to disclose sensitive information with ease. This helps staff to keep them safe and healthy.

Children have positive, nurturing relationships with staff. They like the staff. One child even refers to the responsible individual as her second dad, calling him 'Dad' from time to time. Strong, positive relationships are seen as the key to providing a therapeutic approach that builds confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

Children have lots of opportunities to express their wishes and feelings. They make positive choices about activities, food, décor and the way they are cared for. For example, one child decided she didn't want to go to the activity she had chosen earlier in the week. She said she would prefer to go to a trampolining centre with another child in the house. She did this, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Education is important in this home. Children are encouraged to attend school and generally do attend. Staff are proud of the achievements made by children. Children feel a sense of pride in going to school. For example, a child who attends a mainstream school is proud to wear her smart uniform. When children are not on a school roll or are not in education due to exclusion, staff ensure that they work closely with other professionals to help children back into school as quickly as possible. They ensure that

children are in school placements that suit their abilities and preferences. However, children are not provided with structure when they are not in school. This may make it difficult for children to re-engage in the structure and routines of school.

Children are in good health. They are registered with the local doctor, dentist and optician. They also have access to mental health services. They attend healthcare appointments. Children are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise. This helps to keep children fit and healthy. Children who have previously misused illegal substances and alcohol have made enormous progress towards stopping this behaviour. Staff discuss the health implications of smoking but children currently choose to continue to smoke cigarettes.

Children enjoy a range of activities. These include board games, games consoles, boxing, basketball, football, swimming and going to theme parks. Children learn new skills and important lessons, such as how to respect opponents. For example, a child who could be demeaning towards his opponent will now shake hands with his opponent when he wins. He has also learned to accept losing. Another child has learned to swim confidently since living in this home, and has now achieved a 25-metre swimming certificate. Children's achievements are celebrated. Furthermore, children's birthdays are made very special. Children write lists of presents they would like and staff make sure that the day is special. A social worker said: 'They made a big fuss of her on her birthday.'

Children are encouraged to maintain contact with their family and friends. This is important to children because they are able to build and keep positive relationships with people who are significant to them. Children learn skills that will help them when they leave care. For example, one child is using the train to get to college. Others help with the cooking and shopping. All are expected to keep their rooms tidy, although some find this challenging.

The home provides a warm and welcoming environment for children. They have comfortable bedrooms that are highly personalised and private. The home is clean and well maintained.

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

Children become increasingly safe in this home. Staff have a good understanding of the home's safeguarding policies and procedures. They regularly talk to children about how to keep themselves safe. Risk-taking behaviours have reduced.

Incidents of going missing from the home have reduced dramatically. If children do leave the home without permission, it is for a short period of time or they keep in contact with staff. Staff generally know where they are. Children feel safe, secure and cared for. This means that they do not feel the need to run away.

Incidents of self-harm reduce over time. This is because children have adults around them that they can rely on. They can have open and frank discussions with staff. They know that staff are committed to them.

Strong, nurturing relationships help to promote positive behaviour. Incidents that require physical intervention are infrequent and continuing to reduce. Staff are well trained in physical intervention techniques but focus more on de-escalating situations. Their

positive approach works well. If physical intervention is required, this is used with minimum force, and for the shortest period possible, to enable the child to calm.

Vetting procedures help to prevent unsuitable adults from working with children. Appropriate checks are carried out on all adults employed to work in the home prior to commencing their position.

Health and safety procedures help to keep children safe. Fire safety is managed well.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager and responsible individual use good monitoring systems to give them a firm understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They have good plans to address shortfalls and move the home forward. However, some potential safeguarding concerns were identified during this inspection. These had not been identified prior to the inspection. The concerns were satisfactorily followed up during the inspection, and amounted to poor recording rather than poor safeguarding practice.

Staff have a good understanding of the risks that children face. However, written risk assessments do not address all identified risks. This means that staff do not have access to full information about reducing or eliminating risks to children.

Safeguarding concerns are acted upon appropriately. However, records of safeguarding concerns do not document the action taken or the outcome of investigation. This means that the registered manager is unable to readily demonstrate the action that she has taken in response to safeguarding concerns about children.

Not all staff have a first aid qualification. This means that currently some shifts are not covered by a qualified first aider. However, this has been recognised and rectified by the registered manager. The registered manager is a qualified trainer in first aid and will be delivering this training to all staff.

The registered manager is experienced and qualified. She is ably supported by the responsible individual, who also regularly works with the children. Staff feel very well supported by the management team and each other.

The diverse staff team ensures that the needs of all the children can be met. For example, a child with a Caribbean heritage is very well supported by a team that includes Caribbean staff. His mum said: 'It's a multicultural staff team. This is really important to my son.' Staff help this child to understand and be proud of his cultural heritage.

Staff are either qualified to an appropriate level or are currently completing an appropriate qualification. Staff have access to a good training programme. They also have a range of skills that they have brought to the home. For example, the staff team includes a swimming instructor and a basketball coach. Another member of staff is a qualified teacher and is currently completing a master's degree in social work. This means that a skilled staff team looks after the children. Furthermore, staff are passionate about providing a good service and improving children's life chances.

The management team is a strong advocate for children. They work well with external professionals to ensure children receive the best care. External professionals agree that

there is a 'good level of contact and feedback'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1252023

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Tjunction Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Field Leys Way, Birstall, Leicester LE4 3EL

Responsible individual: Timothy Clare

Registered manager: Cydeena Bonner

Inspector(s)

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector

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