

# 1249326

Registered provider: Unity Residential Care Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private provider operates this home. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children who have experienced childhood instability resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 25 to 26 July 2018

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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:** 14 March 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/07/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Children live in a home that is light and welcoming. The home is brightly decorated, and each child has an ensuite bathroom, which provides them with personal space and privacy. Pictures that capture happy memories and enjoyable events are displayed throughout the home. Consequently, children have a sense of pride in their home.

Children receive outstanding, high-quality care from an experienced and consistent staff team. Staff follow clear, well-written behaviour management plans. This means that children feel reassured and receive sensitive, supportive care from staff. A social worker said, 'It's a pleasure to visit the home. The staff are very nurturing. They offer genuine care and nurture.'

Children are extremely positive about the care that they receive. One child spoke about a member of staff, stating, 'He is literally the best ever. He deserves a pay rise. I'm so lucky to have him as my key worker. He gets things sorted for me. He has changed my life.'

Staff invest time in the children, listen to them and know them well. This helps children to form excellent relationships with staff and to develop a sense of belonging. The caring ethos supports children to make exceptional progress in many areas of their lives, including their education. One child told the inspector, 'I'm happy. I go to school. It's working for me. I am proud I have 100% attendance. That would never have happened if I wasn't here.' The registered manager and the staff team are ambitious for children and have offered extensive support to ensure that their individual needs are met. When children are unable to attend school, staff are proactive in securing an alternative provision. At times, this has required tenacious challenge to education providers.

Children are enabled to maintain positive relationships with those who are important to them. Staff ensure that children continue to benefit from having regular and safe time with their families. Children and social workers spoke positively of the support that staff provide. One child told the inspector, '[Name of registered manager] is pretty awesome for sorting the stuff about my mum out. He is the reason I get to see my mum next week for the first time in years.'

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

Children are kept exceptionally safe and said that they feel safe. This is because of the close and nurturing relationships that children have with staff. Children feel secure enough to share their worries and concerns. This has enabled one child to talk about their past experiences for the first time.

Staff help children to understand their behaviours and how to develop their social skills in a protected environment. Staff believe in positive risk taking and encourage children to access a variety of community activities that help them grow and develop safely.

Staff and children work together to develop risk assessments. This involvement helps children to understand risk. Children are protected from harm because of the excellent support and guidance that they receive from staff.

Staff provide children with clear guidance and boundaries. Staff have a thorough understanding of children's needs, informed by positive behaviour management plans and well-evaluated risk assessments. A social worker told the inspector, 'The staff provide a high standard of care. They give children a sense of belonging and improve their life chances. [Name of child] benefits from the consistency and routine they provide.'

Staff practice is strongly underpinned by research and a thorough understanding of attachment theory. This is the key to children's exceptional progress. Staff acknowledge that children will experience difficulties, but they give children a clear message that they will work together to find solutions. As a result, children learn new strategies to manage their anxieties.

Well-planned key work sessions are undertaken with children to address their individual needs. These sessions contribute to the excellent, sustained progress that children make. A social worker told the inspector, '[Name of child] was at high risk of child sexual exploitation prior to her placement. She has now been taken off her child sexual exploitation plan. She is encouraged to take risks, but appropriately so and under close supervision and monitoring.'

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager is aspirational, child focused and ambitious for the children in his care. This ethos permeates the home and inspires staff to deliver exceptional care. One member of staff told the inspector, 'We all have different experiences and all offer something unique, but we make a good team. We all want the best for children.'

The registered manager is extremely organised and is passionate about the care provided to children at the home. Management oversight and monitoring processes are effective and innovative. The registered manager provides well-written reports for local authority meetings that highlight children's progress and achievements.

The registered manager advocates well for children. He ensures that the children's voices are at the heart of the care that the staff provide.

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from the registered manager and the deputy manager. Supervision sessions are regular and of high quality. They help staff to generate ideas and reflect on their practice. New staff are robustly vetted and are supported through a clear, effective recruitment and induction process. This ensures that staff are equipped to provide high-quality care for children.

All staff are well trained and highly skilled. In addition to the mandatory training courses, other specialist training is arranged by the registered manager, who strives to continually

improve and develop staff practice. He is keen to ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of children who have experienced complex trauma. The registered manager ensures that children receive exceptional, personalised care that responds to their changing needs.

Managers challenge other agencies when this is required. They have developed strong relationships with many professionals involved in children's care. Social workers identified communication as being a key strength of the team. One social worker said, 'I feel blessed to have the relationship that I have with the home. They let me know those things that I need to know, but they get on with the other stuff. Communication is reliable and consistent.'

## **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:** 1249326

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Unity Residential Care Services

**Registered provider address:** Unity Residential Care Services Ltd, 98 Lancaster Road, Newcastle Under Lyme ST5 1DS

**Responsible individual:** Hilary Jones

**Registered manager:** Lyndan Whiston

## Inspector

Annemarie Parker, social care inspector

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