

1236832

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to four children who have had adverse childhood experiences. The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2017.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 September 2019

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 21 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2019	Full	Good
04/12/2017	Full	Good
12/12/2016	Full	Good
05/09/2016	Full	Inadequate

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.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p>	18/10/2019
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))</p>	31/01/2020

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—

31/10/2019

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))

Recommendations

- For children’s homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
 - Children’s homes staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- In particular, ensure that the children attend primary health services.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children develop warm and trusting relationships with the staff. These enable the children to reflect on their past experiences and to develop coping skills and resilience. Good interactions between the staff and the children build strong attachments. One child said, ‘There is not one member of staff who isn’t there for me when I need them. They are so supportive and caring.’

The manager makes careful and considered admission assessments. The manager’s knowledge of the staff’s skills and experience informs the admission process. The manager takes children who complement existing children. New children visit the home, prior to arrival, so that they know what to expect and this reduces their anxiety. Children who have left the home benefit from well-planned transitions.

All children attend school regularly and achieve well. Weekly therapeutic input supports the children’s emotional well-being. Therapeutic input is enhanced by good individual care planning. Overall, the children make good progress in all areas of their lives.

The children enjoy a wide variety of activities. These include holidays, horse riding, boxing, going to the cinema and day trips. These opportunities provide the children with new experiences and develop their social skills and interests.

The staff generally encourage healthy lifestyles, although they failed to arrange a follow-up doctor’s appointment for a child. This does not ensure that children’s health needs are met in a timely manner.

Areas of the house require maintenance. Loose wallpaper in the bathroom and general wear and tear fail to provide an environment that is of consistently good decor.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The management team has failed to implement the home's safeguarding policy. This followed an allegation that was made against a member of staff. The records of the allegation lack detail and the investigation was not carried out in appropriate timescales. This delay potentially places the children at risk.

The children's risk management plans lack information. One plan fails to identify antecedents or preventive actions for a child's self-injurious behaviour. This is despite the behaviour being classed as high risk. This means that the staff are not clearly guided in their responses and this could reduce the effectiveness of the staff's actions.

Children with a history of going missing from home and at risk of sexual exploitation are increasingly safer. The staff implement the children's individualised missing from home protocols. They work closely with the police to locate the children and educate them about their personal safety. This has significantly minimised these incidents.

Children's views are consistently identified and responded to in individual and community meetings. This helps the children to share their feelings openly in the knowledge that the staff listen.

The staff work proactively to engage the children in a programme of meaningful activities. These include self-esteem exercises and independence-building tasks. Individualised incentives and proportionate sanctions are used effectively and prompt a positive change in the children's behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and is working towards a level 5 qualification in leadership and management. The manager ensures that the staff clearly understand the home's statement of purpose. She is committed to the home's ethos to achieve good outcomes and positive experiences for children.

The staff spoke highly of the manager and the wider organisation. The staff benefit from high-quality training and reflective supervision that support them well in their roles. One member of staff spoke about a senior manager and said, 'She is all about the children. If they need something, there are no questions. Everything that she does is about them.'

The internal and external monitoring is effective and drives improvement in the quality of care. Children actively contribute about how their experiences can be improved.

External professionals and family members are positive about the care that the children

receive. One family member said, 'They [the staff] are very friendly and extremely helpful. The home is good for her [the child].'

The children's records provide meaningful memories and clear chronologies. One professional said, 'Communication is excellent and effective. The staff listen well to [child's name]. They are very consistent with the weekly reports and keep everyone regularly updated.'

One member of staff has failed to complete a suitable level 3 qualification within the set timescales. This does not ensure that all of the staff have the necessary knowledge and skills required.

The management has failed to notify Ofsted about a significant incident at the home. This affects Ofsted's ability to monitor the home and to ensure that the children are effectively safeguarded.

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: 1236832

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Registered provider address: Church Farm House, Station Road, Aldbury, Tring
HP23 5RS

Responsible individual: Claudette Deysel

Registered manager: Karen McNeil

Inspectors

Natalie Burton: social care inspector

Mark Anderton: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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