

1027158

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home, which is managed by a private organisation, provides long-term placements for six children who have social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and may be considered vulnerable. The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2018.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 November 2019

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: 10 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/09/2018	Full	Good
29/09/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 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) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	<p>31/12/2019</p>

Recommendations

- Children must feel safe and be safe. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. Staff should help children to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 43, paragraph 9.9)

In particular, ensure that the plans to erect a fence and gate are implemented promptly.
- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 43, paragraph 9.12)

In particular, ensure that staff who undertake fire risk assessments are competent to do so.
- Children must be listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. Staff should report any allegation of abuse immediately to a senior manager within the home. Any allegation of harm or abuse must be addressed in line with the home’s child protection policy. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 44, paragraph 9.17)

In particular, record any investigation into an allegation against a member of staff and clearly state the rationale for the action taken.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have strong relationships with the staff, who care about them and for them. A child said, 'It has made such a difference living here. I feel like I belong somewhere.' These relationships provide foundations that enable children to make progress in a range of areas.

Children make progress with their behaviour. A social worker said that their child had reduced the need to be restrained to almost no incidents.

Some children make progress with their health, including their mental health. Professionals spoke of a reduction in self-harm incidents. Staff link with specialist health professionals to meet the children's needs.

Children make progress with their independence skills. One child has support from a specialist service to help him to develop his self-care skills for independence. Another child spoke of developing social skills and confidence as well as learning to cook for themselves.

The children attend school. When attendance is an issue, the staff work with schools to support plans for education and reintegration. The staff and manager support the children to engage in work experience in the local area.

The children enjoy a range of activities. These include ambitious holidays. One child spoke with enthusiasm about having been away on three camping trips in three different countries.

The staff work well with families to enable them to spend time with their children. A parent said, 'There has never been anything that I have asked the staff to do that they have not been able to do.'

The manager has identified a potential risk in the grounds. She has an interim risk assessment in place to manage this as a temporary measure. She has made a request to senior managers for fencing and a gate to increase the security for children. However, senior managers have not responded. Therefore, identified risks remain and there is no long-term resolution.

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

The children said that they feel safe and that the staff are there for them when they need them. Children share concerns or worries with the staff, who know them well. The children said that the staff understand them.

Children rarely go missing. There has only been one incident since the last inspection.

There are frequent incidents when the staff physically intervene to keep children safe. Children said that the holds are supportive and help them feel safe. The number of interventions for individual children reduces over time.

The management team ensures that information is passed to the designated officer when concerns about staff arise. However, in the one instance when this occurred, no investigation report was produced. Although investigation activity took place, managers did not draw this information together or evaluate it in a clear format. This makes it difficult to understand the rationale for decisions.

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

The manager has high expectations for the home. Professionals said that she has a clear focus on the needs of the children. This focus has enabled strong relationships with children to develop.

The manager has ensured a good overall experience for the children. However, there remain several areas for improvement relating to wider management, particularly oversight and monitoring. The monitoring of case records is not good. Errors and omissions in records are compounded by a lack of meaningful oversight and evaluation. This results in a lack of scrutiny of incidents and limits the opportunities to guide and develop staff. In addition, this has the potential to reduce opportunities for staff to reflect on practice. Monitoring of the physical environment is not good enough and issues are not always identified. A grab bag is in place for staff to use if a child goes missing in darkness. However, its contents are not monitored. When checked during the inspection, this bag did not contain all the items that it should and the phone that is kept in the bag was out of charge.

Although managers undertake fire risk assessments, they are not trained to do so and do not have the necessary knowledge to ensure that all risk-reduction strategies are effective.

The manager has a good understanding of the needs and experiences of the children. She has made significant improvement to impact assessments.

Feedback from external professionals is strong. They spoke of good working relationships with the staff and the manager. Families spoke highly of the home. They said that the staff and managers make time for them and that the communication is good.

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: 1027158

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Registered provider address: White House Business Centre, The White House, Greenalls Avenue, Warrington, Warrington WA4 6HL

Responsible individual: Joanne Murray

Registered manager: Sarah Mansi

Inspector

Ashley Hinson: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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>

© Crown copyright 2019