

# 1232650

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

The children's home is owned and managed by a sole provider. It provides care and accommodation for children and young people whose plan is for them to live in medium- to long-term residential care.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2017.

**Inspection date:** 21 January 2020

**Date of last inspection:** 22 October 2019

**Judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **This inspection**

### **The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection**

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The requirement from the last inspection, in relation to children and young people having up-to-date risk assessments that include key information to prevent further harm, has not been satisfactorily addressed. While the children and young people's written risk assessments have been updated recently, not all of the points reflect the children and young people's current situation. This can undermine arrangements and understandings about how to keep children safe. Furthermore, it is concerning that the registered manager and staff have not escalated information to the placing local authority when several weeks ago a bruise was observed on a child's face. The follow-up work involving discussion between the registered manager and the child about the nature of the bruise was not implemented. It is therefore not clear how the registered manager has satisfied himself that children are safe.

Key-work sessions have engaged most children in conversations about their involvement in risky behaviours. For example, an allegation made by a child in relation to an incident in the community was followed up in conjunction with the home and the police. The child's individual risk assessments have been updated. However, the registered manager has not updated the home's locality risk assessment to include the impact of the serious nature of the allegation on the children and young people's ongoing safety in the community.

Children and young people's experiences and progress have been mixed. One young person is due to leave the home soon. They speak highly about their experiences and progress, particularly about how the support and nurture from the staff team have improved their life. The staff have supported the young person to visit their new home. The farewell gifts that the staff had bought values the young person. One young person who is due to make the transition into semi-independence has been spending less time in the home. They are disengaging with the staff. This is despite the best efforts of the staff team to encourage the young person to spend more time at the home and with the staff. This has led to several unauthorised absences that have recently been resolved through a written agreement with the social worker.

Not all the children and young people are making progress in their education. This is despite the committed efforts by the staff to engage them in various educational packages. For some children and young people, the significant decline in their education attendance and attainment is limiting their capacity to reach their future goals. Those children and young people who do attend school have rediscovered a thirst for learning. They are attending school regularly and show a commitment to achieving good results to enable them to prosper.

Not all children and young people's health needs are being met due to their refusal to engage with health appointments and attend to their personal care and overall presentation consistently.

Children and young people who have left the home remain in contact with the staff team, which is testament to positive relationships. Staff maintain good relationships with partners, such as the specialist mental health professional who offers support to the staff to meet children and young people's specific needs.

The requirement to ensure that any concerns of possible sexual exploitation are reported to the police has been addressed. Similarly, the registered manager has taken steps to ensure that Ofsted is notified about significant incidents in a timely manner. This enables Ofsted to monitor how the children and young people living in the home are being safeguarded.

No children and young people have been admitted to the home since the last inspection, therefore the requirement in relation to impact risk assessments cannot be determined.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/10/2019	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Full	Good
05/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/08/2017	Full	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 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 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), (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all risks and behaviours of children and young people against those who are already living in the home are considered prior to admission; and that risk assessments are updated following incidents of new behaviours, to include all the potential risks and methods to prevent further harm to individual children and young people.</p>	21/02/2020
<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 staff—</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(iii)(vii))</p>	21/02/2020

<p>Specifically,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the registered person must take decisive action to refer any injuries to children to the relevant placing authority without delay.</li> <li>■ Update risk assessments to include how any further concerns will be monitored and recorded.</li> <li>■ Update risk assessments when risk has reduced to and record the rationale for reducing the risk.</li> </ul>	
<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 premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12(1), (2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered provider must ensure that the home's locality risk assessment is updated following new incidents and include the strategies to prevent harm to children living in the home.</p>	<p>21/02/2020</p>

## Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Specifically, the registered provider should ensure that any follow-up actions to speak to children and young people about issues of concern are undertaken.

## **Information about this inspection**

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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:** 1232650

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

**Registered provider:** Friends Together Care Homes Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 7 Tenter Lane, Warmsworth, Doncaster, Yorkshire  
DN4 9PP

**Responsible individual:** Thomas Worthington

**Registered manager:** Gary Jones

## Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, social care inspector



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