

# 1236832

**Benjamin UK Limited**

Monitoring visit

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 date:** 28 January 2021

## **This monitoring visit**

This monitoring visit was undertaken following an increase in incidents of the children going missing from the home and placing themselves at significant risk. At this visit, no serious safeguarding concerns were identified. This visit was undertaken remotely.

At the time of the visit, there was one child in placement. Four children have recently left the home. Two children have moved into semi-independent living accommodation. One child returned to their family home, and a decision was made to end the placement of the fourth child.

The staff supported one child to voice her views about staying in the same area, despite this not being the area of her placing authority. This child recently moved into semi-independent living accommodation as part of her plan. This accommodation is close to the home and reflects the child's choice.

The duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions have affected the way that the home operates. Community activities have been severely limited. However, the staff improvised and provided the children with stimulating activities and fun at the home. The staff worked with the teaching staff to enable children to access education. This provides the children with structure and purpose during the periods of local and national restrictions.

The children's records provide the children with information about their day. The records are well written and helpful to the children reading them. The records demonstrate the staff's attempts to engage the children with external agencies to support their identified needs. The records also show that the staff have meaningful discussions with the children and their caring responses to any areas of concern.

Some of the children continued to place themselves at risk until they left the home. Their behaviours included going missing from the home, placing themselves at high risk of sexual exploitation, refusing to leave one another's bedrooms and dangerous behaviours on the main road. The children's risk-taking behaviour continued despite the staff's efforts to reduce these. The staff responded by implementing the children's plans, reviewing risk assessments and working closely with the home's therapist and external agencies.

The managers undertook detailed impact risk assessments of children prior to them moving into the home. However, the dynamics of the group of children resulted in increased risk-taking behaviours. These risks were exacerbated by the location of the home, and therefore the staff were not able to reduce the risks to children. Because of these local risk factors, one of the children experienced an unplanned placement ending.

The manager has not ensured that significant incidents are reported to Ofsted in a consistent manner and in a reasonable time frame. The updates to important information linked to incidents are not always provided. Therefore, some of the information is not available. This makes it difficult for Ofsted to assess whether the home has taken appropriate action.

The manager has met the three requirements and one of the two recommendations that were raised at the last inspection. Investigations into allegations about the staff are of good quality. Records clearly demonstrate the actions taken. When appropriate, mediation is undertaken between the child and the member of staff. This process ensures that the children are listened to.

The home has been fully decorated to ensure that children live in a homely and welcoming environment. One recommendation was not looked at during the visit and has been repeated.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/09/2019	Full	Good
21/01/2019	Full	Good
04/12/2017	Full	Good
12/12/2016	Full	Good

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the staff encourage the children to attend their necessary primary health services appointments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they are satisfied that the staff can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. This refers specifically to the risk assessment of the children's needs and behaviours in relation to the location of the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The registered person should, in addition, ensure that the appropriate people are provided with additional updates and information following the incident. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

### Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor specific concerns received by Ofsted.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

### 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 Rudman

**Registered manager:** Karen McNeil

### Inspectors

Natalie Burton, Social Care Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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