

# 1185488

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four young people. The statement of purpose states that the home caters for the needs of young people between the ages of eight and 17 years. It aims to create a warm, caring environment that is safe and supportive, enabling young people to recover from past life experiences and grow to achieve their full potential.

The previous manager resigned his registration in September 2020. The current manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 25 February 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2020	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Good
24/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

Placement stability has improved since the last full inspection. Staff work together to provide a consistent approach with the children at the centre of their practice. Children have good relationships with staff and speak of them affectionately. Children are in the right place with the right support, leading them to make good progress. Examples are a child with social anxiety being able to enter a shop on their own and another child rebuilding a fractured relationship with a family member. Children are respectful to others and conduct themselves with dignity.

Children develop their own identity. They take pride in their appearance and enjoy clothing and fashion. Staff support them to make informed decisions such as whether they want to continue to pursue their religious faith. Staff work with other professionals so that children can see the people that are important to them, such as friends and family. This includes planning overnight stays. Children are growing in confidence to develop their wider network of support and encouragement.

Children make good progress in their education. One child has completed GCSEs and has gained a college placement. Another child has started to engage with education, following years of refusing any form of learning. A professional involved in this child's care described this as 'a huge step forward in the right direction'. In some cases, formal education is supported by home learning. However, staff do not always follow the home's timetable or ensure that it has sufficient detail to guide them in fully supporting each child's home learning. No negative impact is currently evident.

Staff promote children's independence. For example, children learn domestic skills and go shopping. A statutory report stated that, '(Name of child) has gained a level of independence and responsibility and is making sensible choices.' One child, who aspires for independence, does not currently have a bank account. Staff have not pursued this with the placing authority to help the child manage her own money. This is a missed opportunity to fully promote life skills that are essential for living independently.

There has been considerable investment in the fabric of the home since the last inspection. Children and staff speak proudly of the warm, homely environment. Some issues detract from this, such as staff wearing keys around their neck, date labels on food and some small holes in window frames where window restrictors have been removed.

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

Staff sensitively support the children to manage painful emotions. They use their positive relationships well and do not need to resort to any form of physical restraint when children are processing their difficult feelings. They take seriously what children say to them and liaise with others, such as health professionals, to keep

children as safe as possible. Staff advocate for children to get the therapy that they request, such as horse therapy, at the right time.

Staff work with the children to help them to understand how to protect themselves. For example, explaining child sexual exploitation in a child-friendly way. In the main, staff are knowledgeable about the risks associated with e-safety, although occasional mishaps have occurred. Some staff would benefit from being upskilled in e-safety and being fully acquainted with each child's specific safety measures in this regard.

The registered manager applies the safeguarding policy in practice, for example in the event of an allegation. She ensures that other safeguarding professionals are notified and that the necessary action is taken. She ensures that staff reflect on practice in their supervision. In one case however, a supervision record did not explicitly describe the discussion about a significant incident, so staff learning was not fully evident.

Senior leaders adopt safer recruitment practice to ensure that only individuals who are suitable to work with children are employed. On occasion, agency staff have worked in the home. Senior leaders did not formally test that the agency adopts safer recruitment in practice, relying on written records only, provided by the agency. No agency staff are currently being used; therefore, children are not currently at risk by this omission. Senior leaders accept that their own systems must improve before using agency staff in the future.

Key staff review risk assessments to guide staff in the control measures necessary to keep children safe. In one case, staff had not updated a risk assessment with the most up-to-date control measures. Staff had agreement with the placing social worker to reduce the close supervision, so no child was at risk. This clerical oversight could, however, be a source of confusion for staff.

On occasion, children are absent without permission or missing from care. Staff are diligent in following the agreed protocols, including working with the police. It is worthy to note that waking-night staff continue attempts to contact children who are not in the home overnight. Staff keep detailed chronologies of the actions that they take during the missing episode and the work completed with the child afterwards, to prevent recurrence. Consequently, staff keep children as safe as possible and missing episodes are decreasing.

Staff work proactively with other agencies to keep children safe from other risks, such as the risk of county lines. Strategies are currently working. Staff and children follow the right procedures to keep everyone safe.

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

The registered manager is demonstrating good leadership that is underpinned by a competent deputy manager. They have gained the respect of the children, staff and other professionals. One professional said, 'I have found working with the registered manager really effective. She always follows through.'

Staff speak positively of their line managers and the support given through the supervision process. This, coupled with regular group supervision with the organisation's clinical psychologist, means that staff are in the best place to provide the necessary support to children.

The registered manager has a workforce development plan in place that is specific about the bespoke training needs for staff. This includes the therapeutic training as described in the statement of purpose. This increases the ability of the staff team to meet the aims and objectives in the statement of purpose.

Management monitoring is good. Independent visit reports are now supplied on a regular basis to Ofsted and other professionals. These identify the pertinent issues, and the manager uses these to drive forward improvement. Likewise, the registered manager uses the statutory six-monthly reporting process to set 'SMART' goals for the next period.

The registered manager notifies the relevant agencies, including Ofsted, of significant incidents. In one case, however, she did not notify education professionals of a relevant incident. This had occurred in the home and could have been of interest to the school to help keep children safe in all their environments.

The registered manager ensures that placement plans contain sufficient details to guide staff and that they are regularly updated. Staff keep good daily records that give an account of each child's life in the home. A placing social worker said, 'The team are amazing at contacting me and proactive in requesting meetings about the needs of the child.'

## 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8(1) (2)(a)(i))</p>	30 September 2021
<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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v))</p>	30 September 2021
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p>	30 September 2021

<p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure children have a bank account.</p>	
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure the same recruitment scrutiny is applied for agency workers.</p>	<p>30 September 2021</p>

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that while complying with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); they should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. (Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards, paragraph 3.9, page 15)

## **Information about this 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:** 1185488

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

**Registered provider:** Kennet Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** C/O Stan Colaco & Co, Regus Business Centre, Centurion House, London Road, Staines Upon Thames TW18 4AX

**Responsible individual:** Dennis Austin-Visser

**Registered manager:** Julie Murrell

## Inspector

Keith Riley, Social Care Inspector

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