

# 1214266

Registered provider: Platform Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that cares for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager was registered in September 2020. She is suitably qualified and experienced.

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

### Inspection dates: 10 to 11 August 2021

**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:** 14 January 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** not applicable

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
17/01/2018	Full	Outstanding
18/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## **Inspection judgements**

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

When children move into the home, transitions happen at the child's pace. As a result, each child is aware of the home's routines, expectations and rules from the beginning. One child who recently left the home said that staff are 'amazing', and described feeling 'loved, valued and respected'. The child was well prepared for independence. When children leave the home, staff maintain contact and some children continue to visit.

Children like living in this home. They describe spending time with staff as 'fun'. Children are involved in decisions about the running of the home and they have a good relationship with the manager. Staff recognise the importance of building meaningful relationships with children's families. One grandparent wrote a thank you letter to the home, thanking staff for the care provided to their grandchild.

Children are encouraged to make friends and sustain friendships. For example, children have sleepovers and playdates at the home. All children do some form of regular fitness activity and they are encouraged to eat healthily. Children take pride in their appearance. Staff support children with health appointments and have encouraged one child to reduce their nicotine habit. Most children have an educational placement and are making progress academically.

The upstairs area of the home has signs of damage and this has not been adequately repaired in a timely manner. For example, the doors are marked, the bathroom needs modernising, and some furniture needs replacing.

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

Risk assessments and children's plans are detailed and do outline risks for children. However, two serious incidents have not been notified to Ofsted. Furthermore, in one of these incidents, a child alleged that they had been harmed by an adult but this was not reported to the police. Incidents are well recorded but there is not enough professional curiosity shown by staff in terms of verifying and clarifying information. For example, when children have misused substances, time has not been prioritised the following day to ascertain who the child was with when the incident happened. This is particularly risky when children have a history of associating with adults who may pose a risk to children. In addition, when children have shared information about potentially concerning online activity, there has not been enough follow-up action to fully assess whether the child is at risk. Although, the manager has links with the police, they have not been used effectively to follow up on information that has been provided by children.

Children state that they are safe where they live. They talk to staff regularly about how they are feeling. Although there have been some incidents resulting in physical interventions, these have significantly reduced. There is a strong emphasis on de-escalation and supporting children to express their emotions in ways that are safer. When children are away from the home, they remain contactable by phone and they will allow staff to look at their devices during spot checks.

Wider professionals are complimentary about the care provided to children. They state that children have become safer since living in the home. Overall, children follow house rules and respond well to the consistent boundaries set by staff. Children are encouraged to take age-related risks, such as walking to school on their own and they are supported to spend some time in the community safely with their friends.

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

The manager knows the children well. She provides strong leadership, enabling the staff to be resilient and overcome difficult situations. For example, the staff team remained committed to one child even when staff were receiving regular injuries. This child is now calmer and can regulate their emotions in a safer way.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the manager demonstrated great commitment to the children. She effectively moved into the home so that children could receive consistent care. The staff team is stable and there is a full staff team in place. This has enabled children to build strong, trusting relationships with staff. The staff are well supported through regular supervisions and appraisals.

There are some shortfalls that relate to the manager not taking effective action when children may have been at risk of harm and not sharing relevant information with local police. Professional curiosity relating to safeguarding is not yet fully embedded into staff practice. However, overall, the leadership and management of the home is good, the children are well cared for and the staff team is positive about the support provided.

## 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 staff 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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(a) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vi))</p> <p>This relates to the manager needing to have more professional curiosity. When children have disclosed that they may be at risk, the manager must immediately act with wider professionals to safeguard children. Discussions with children need to be prioritised after incidents happen to ascertain what risk a child may have been exposed to. After such discussions, the manager must implement an action plan to ensure children's safety is maintained.</p>	01/09/2021
<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>	01/09/2021

<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>This relates to the manager needing to review current safeguarding policies for children. Where there have been shortfalls in safeguarding practice, it is necessary for the manager and the staff team to learn from this. Professional curiosity is not yet embedded into staff practice.</p> <p>In addition, the manager needs to continually review the standard of the property in terms of damage and repairs. Although there are no safety hazards, the upstairs of the home needs some modernising. Damaged items are not being repaired to a good enough standard or in a timely manner.</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to,</p> <p>sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child —</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p> <p>This relates to informing Ofsted if a child is involved in a serious incident, particularly if this is a new risk for a child. When incidents happen, it is necessary for the manager to gather all relevant information before deciding whether a notification needs to be completed.</p>	<p>01/09/2021</p>

## **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:** 1214266

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

**Registered provider:** Platform Childcare Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Suite 2 First Floor, Millennium Court, First Avenue, Centrum 100, Burton-Upon-Trent DE14 2WH

**Responsible individual:** Zamir Lal

**Registered manager:** Natalie Lacey

## Inspector

Andi Lilley-Tams, Social Care Inspector



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