

# 1264286

Registered provider: Platform Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. The home cares for up to four children who experience social, behavioural and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

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: 21 and 22 September 2021

**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      good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 27 February 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
27/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/05/2019	Full	Good
12/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

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

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. Staff are knowledgeable and are committed to the children they care for. They provide children with a consistent routine in a calm, homely environment. This offers children a sense of stability and has enabled them to make good progress across all areas of their development.

Staff have built warm and respectful relationships with children. This means that children have someone to share their views and any worries with. When children need more specialist help with their mental health, staff contribute to referrals and support the children to engage with the services offered.

Children are supported to have good physical health. Staff encourage children to eat well and to be active. When needed, staff help children to access services that they need, for example to help them stop cannabis use and smoking.

All children are engaging in learning that is individual to their needs. One child is accessing education online from the home. Staff are helping to develop plans to reintroduce this child to school and have kept up momentum by taking the child to visit different types of education provision. Staff have good relationships with children's schools, which helps them to identify and resolve issues quickly.

Staff follow structured plans to help children gain independence skills. These include supporting them with practical skills such as money management and household DIY. Children engage well with these programmes.

Staff introduce children to new activities that help them build confidence and memories. One child said that being at the home has given them opportunities to try things that they would never have tried otherwise.

Staff ensure that children are helped to understand and explore their culture. Children are supported to celebrate cultural festivals and follow their religion. For example, the manager fasted with a child during Ramadan.

Staff are sensitive to the relationships that children have with their families and promote these in line with children's care plans. They have provided a high level of support to help plans for one child to return home.

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

Children say that they feel safe living at the home. Staff work proactively to deliver structured 'keep me safe' sessions that help children to learn about issues such as online safety, bullying and exploitation.

Staff are provided with a thorough induction. This includes attending face-to-face training in safeguarding, first aid and behaviour management before they start working with children at the home. This helps staff to feel more confident in their safeguarding duties.

Staff are successful in using de-escalation strategies with children to avoid verbal and physical aggression. As a result, there has only been one incident of restraint, which was short and effective. The manager reviewed the record of the incident and led debrief conversations with staff and the child. However, the record of restraint does not clearly evidence the behaviours observed or steps taken prior to the hold being used. This limits the ability to review potential triggers for behaviour or the effectiveness of strategies used.

Staff respond quickly to keep children safe when incidents occur. This includes when children go missing from the home. Staff are tenacious in their efforts to find and return children safely. They work closely with the police and children's family members to try and identify where children may be. The manager ensures that staffing levels are sufficient to support efforts to find the children and to travel to collect them when found. The staffing levels limit the disruption to the other children's routines. Staff are sensitive to information that suggests that children are vulnerable to exploitation. The manager reviews all incidents of children going missing from the home to identify potential trends to reduce the risks further.

Staff are vigilant about the risks to children in the community. All safeguarding concerns are shared with the relevant professionals promptly, including sharing information with the police about local amenities of concern.

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

The manager is a strong leader with high expectations and aspirations for staff and children. She has embedded working practices that fulfil the home's aim of providing care that increases children's resilience.

The manager is exceptionally well organised. She has a detailed knowledge of the children's needs and care plans. This enables effective oversight of the day-to-day operation of the home.

The manager has established positive working relationships with professionals and children's family members. She is proactive in planning for children to address issues as they arise. This includes reviewing plans for education to provide children with the coordinated support that they need to help them attend and feel confident in lessons. The manager advocates for children when they need more support to meet their needs.

Half of the staff are new to working in the home. The manager identified staff retention as an area for improvement and has put in place a new process of recruitment. New members of staff have diverse interests and experience that

benefit the children. For example, some staff enjoy playing football and going to the gym, while others like cooking. Staff say that they love working at the home and they feel fully supported by each other and the manager.

Staff receive regular supervision. The manager has established personal development plans for staff which outline their learning needs. However, one member of staff has not achieved a relevant level 3 diploma within the required timescale.

The independent person visits the home monthly as required. These visits do not routinely include consultation with professionals or children's families. This limits the overall effectiveness of this quality assurance process.

The manager regularly reviews the service. These reviews include feedback from children, staff and professionals and help to inform the home's development plan.

## 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>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p>	<p>1 March 2022</p>
<p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit (“the independent person’s report”) which sets out, in particular, the independent person’s opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children’s well-being. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (4)(a)(b))</p>	<p>1 November 2021</p>

## **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of restraint to identify effective practice. In particular, records of restraint should clearly outline observations of behaviour and steps taken to de-escalate any incidents before restraint is used. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

## **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:** 1264286

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

**Registered provider:** Platform Childcare Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Zamir Lal

**Registered manager:** Isabel Walker-Smith

## Inspector

Paula Edwards, Social Care Inspector



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