

1027158

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is managed by a private organisation. It provides long-term placements for six children with social and behavioural difficulties, who may be considered vulnerable.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2018.

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.

We last visited this home on 15 December 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 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: 19 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2019	Full	Good
10/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/09/2018	Full	Good
29/09/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children have lived at the home for a significant period of time and are settled and happy. One child said, 'If it was up to me, I would live here forever.' Staff build trusting and nurturing relationships with children. These relationships support children to make progress in different areas of their lives. Staff work well with external professionals to support the children's needs and find solutions to challenges. The children have complex needs and it is a testament to the staff that all of the children experience stability.

Most children have made good progress in relation to their education. A senior staff member from one school said that relationships with the staff ensure that the children's education is prioritised. When issues arise at school, staff have worked with teachers to address these and help the children to overcome challenges. Staff also recognise and reward children's achievements at school. Good support for children's education has helped them to make consistent progress. However, one older child is not currently engaged in any education. There are no clear plans to identify an appropriate education provision and support the child's education.

Children's emotional well-being is supported well by the staff. Staff help children to access appropriate therapeutic support. The staff work with health professionals to provide effective day-to-day care for children. Children are helped to understand feelings relating to their gender identity. Staff have sought appropriate professional support to provide specific support for one child. A clear commitment to equality and diversity has helped the child feel accepted by the other children and staff.

Staff help the children to learn the life skills that they will need to live independently. Children practise cooking, budgeting and other general life skills. One child has recently secured a part-time job which they enjoy and staff have appropriately supported. Children said that learning new skills makes them more confident about moving on from the home.

The home has recently been refurbished to a good standard, with a new kitchen and bathrooms. It has been redecorated throughout. It provides a suitable and homely environment for the children to live in.

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

Some children can display behaviours that present a high level of risk. Good-quality risk assessments provide clear strategies for staff to manage these risks. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of risk and how to manage this effectively. One child has had a significant reduction in incidents of self-harm. The staff support the child in line with their risk assessment in ways that have supported them to feel safe. One child said, 'The staff, I just trust them because no matter what happens

they are always there for me.' The staff's commitment to helping children to reduce risk-taking behaviour has supported the children to keep safe.

Staff manage incidents well. Incidents of aggression from children have reduced and when they occur children are helped by staff to de-escalate. Staff show children nurture and care through their responses when the children are upset or angry. When children are involved in incidents, the staff encourage them to reflect on their behaviours. Key-work sessions and restorative approaches are used to aid children to do this. Good responses to children's behaviour help the children to learn from incidents.

The use of physical interventions has significantly decreased. These are only used when necessary to keep children or others safe. Children and staff are appropriately supported following incidents and the manager has good oversight of these. Appropriate use of and responses to physical interventions have helped keep incidents to a minimum.

Some allegations have been made about the staff. Managers have generally worked with external agencies to investigate these concerns. Areas for development have been identified through the investigations and appropriate actions taken as a result. These have included all staff undertaking refresher training in safeguarding, which helped increase staff's knowledge in this area. However, one allegation of emotional harm from a child was not identified by managers for over two weeks. Once identified, a referral was made to the designated officer. The investigation was limited in scope and records of it were unclear as to who had been spoken to as part of the investigation. Failure to follow safeguarding procedures means that allegations of harm against children have not always been appropriately investigated.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and qualified to level 5. She is highly committed to the role and well respected by children, staff and external professionals. One child said, 'Children's homes need more people like her. She just cares and that's what we need.'

The manager has a clear understanding of the children's needs and how staff work to meet these. There are good systems in place to monitor practice. Good monitoring and oversight mean that learning is taken from incidents and ensure that plans accurately reflect the children's needs.

Managers and staff have built good working relationships with external professionals and children's families. Professionals and family members said that staff are open to new ideas and make improvements to the care being provided for children. They all spoke of excellent communication and staff's commitment to the children. One parent said, 'I couldn't be more grateful for what they do. They have created a home from home.'

Staff feel supported in their roles by managers. They receive regular supervision which considers children's progress, as well as staff well-being. Managers provide debriefs for staff after challenging incidents. Regular team meetings provide a forum for staff and managers to consider how practice can be improved. Good support for staff helps create a supportive environment better equipped to meet children's needs.

Staff generally receive good levels of training, which is relevant to the needs of the children and helps to increase staff knowledge. However, two of the staff have not completed the level 3 diploma within the required timescales.

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—</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that all allegations against staff are managed in line with the safeguarding policy.</p>	<p>28 October 2021</p>
<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 1st 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 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p>	<p>31 January 2022</p>

does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or

works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff act as effective advocates for or on behalf of a child who may be experiencing difficulties with education or training matters. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.12)

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: 1027158

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Janet Porter

Registered manager: Sarah Mansi

Inspector

Joe Cox, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021