

1256059

Registered provider: Homes 2 Inspire Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company that is owned by a national charity. It provides care for up to five children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has recently left his post and there is an acting manager in place.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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: 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
04/12/2018	Full	Good
21/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy their life in this home. They are happy and safe. Children's comments included, 'It's really nice living here.'

Staff and children have good and affectionate bonds. Children are relaxed in the company of staff. The environment is homely, clean and tidy. There is a family-like environment. For example, everyone shares their meal together at the dinner table, and there is lots of laughter and fun.

Professionals speak very positively about children's progress. One social worker reported: 'The home is very nurturing, child focused and supportive, and staff are really concerned about the welfare of the children.'

Children make good progress in education. One social worker reported on a child's education, saying, 'There are great improvements.' When children do not cope with a full-time school, alternative education arrangements are made. These are designed specifically for the individual child. Staff work hard to break down barriers to learning and are a constant source of support and encouragement to children. This helps the children to make good progress.

Children become more independent. Children's plans are based on the age and individual needs of the child, together with their areas of need and development. For example, one older child has been supported by staff in his decision to leave college and go into employment. He has been able to design his room in the style of a studio flat, and he is working hard to develop his independent living skills.

There have been times, since the last inspection in November 2019, when children have not been so well matched to live together. There have been periods when the home has been unsettled, with several children moving into the home and leaving. However, more recently this has settled down. The current group of children are better matched with each other.

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

Involved professionals, including the police and social workers, say that children are safe. Children also report that they feel safe. One child told the inspector, 'I feel all the staff are safe.' Staff are not afraid of having difficult and sensitive conversations with children. This helps children to learn about how to keep themselves safe.

Staff know what to do when children go missing. The staff work well with involved professionals and escalate their concerns if required. They keep in touch with children and follow the child's risk assessment. Several months ago, leaders decided that an alarm to the front door was required. This was to deter children from

attempting to leave the home unauthorised by staff. This alarm has still not been installed. Staff feel concerned that children may still be able to leave the home without their knowledge. Some staff members remain concerned that they do not understand how to check children's electronic devices, such as phones, in line with their risk assessments.

Behaviour management is good. Staff know what to do to manage the children's behaviour. Staff use de-escalation techniques, when incidents arise, rather than physical intervention. Physical intervention is rare in this home. The manager reviews in detail all incidents involving physical intervention. Staff listen to children and obtain their views following a physical intervention. Staff are likewise reflective and see if they can derive any learning from incidents.

Staff know their responsibilities in keeping children safe. Where safeguarding matters have not been referred to the appropriate agencies, the staff concerned have been held to account by managers. The staff know that safeguarding children is their top priority. Managers reinforced this recently through further team development in this crucial area.

Prospective new staff undergo a range of checks to ensure they are safe to work with children. However, the recruitment file pertaining to one member of staff contained confusing information from referees. Additionally, the staff member's interview was poorly conducted and lacked thoroughness. This staff member no longer works at the home. However, an opportunity has been missed to learn lessons and to make improvements to the recruitment process. More recently, the recruitment processes have become more robust, and this reduces the risk of unsuitable adults working in the home.

Children's plans address their individual needs. The plans set out what actions staff should take to provide good, effective care and protection to children. Children's individual risk assessments contain sufficient detail. These assessments are updated in accordance with children's complex and ever-changing needs.

The home keeps electronic records. These are sometimes difficult for staff and managers to access. There are times when information about children cannot be accessed quickly and easily by staff or managers.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been some examples of poor performance from staff since the last inspection. The quality of care to children has fallen short of the required standard. However, leaders took immediate action and this has led to significant improvement.

The members of the staff team have been through a period of turbulence and change. A recent recruitment drive means that the home is now approaching being fully staffed. This was following several staff leaving. There are sufficient staff to

care for children. Leaders and managers are working hard with the resources available to provide the children with good-quality care.

Staff training records are poorly maintained. These fail to accurately demonstrate staff training and development. It cannot be established which staff have completed the required training, for example in caring for children who have autistic spectrum conditions, e-safety and other areas of safeguarding training. The manager understands the importance of this and is actively improving this area.

The new acting manager has only been in post for a short period. The manager intends to register with Ofsted. The management arrangements in this home remain stable, despite the recent changes. This is because there was a planned transition between managers. Additionally, the deputy manager has a good knowledge of past and current issues and is providing good supporting to the new manager.

The manager and deputy manager are completing shifts to cover for staff sickness due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They are also undertaking a review of the quality of care to inform a new development plan for the home. Managers and staff alike have worked incredibly hard during the pandemic. There have been times when staff have worked consecutive double shifts, to minimise the risk of infection to the children. COVID-19 is still having an impact. It is a credit to everyone that children are settled and making progress.

Staff have a regular supervision meeting with their manager. These meetings are of good quality. Staff speak freely about the children and have their care practice appraised and monitored. There has been a shortfall relating to managers not addressing, through supervision, concerns over a member of staff's performance.

Leaders and managers have reviewed their approaches to admitting new children to the home. They recognise that some poor decisions were made regarding some children admitted to the home. Managers understand this and now act quickly when they know staff cannot safely care for children. This has led to some children leaving the home. The processes for assessing which children are right for the home have improved. They are now stronger.

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>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>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to staff training on looking after children who have autistic spectrum conditions, e-safety and other areas of child protection training.</p>	28 February 2022

Recommendations

- The responsible individual should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This is with specific reference to the home's electronic recording system, where staff and managers do not have full access to important records. (Guide to the children's homes regulations and the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The responsible individual should ensure that supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This is in relation to making sure that shortfalls in staff performance are

addressed in supervision. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

- The responsible individual should ensure that children have access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: 1256059

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes 2 Inspire Limited

Registered provider address: Lumonics House, Valiant Office Suites, Valley Drive, Swift Valley Industrial Estate, Rugby CV21 1TQ

Responsible individual: Steven Brown

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Caroline Brailsford, Social Care Inspector

Shaun Caplis, Social Care Inspector

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