

1236625

Registered provider: Happy Group (uk) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a small provider and is registered to care for up to three children with social and emotional needs.

The manager is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 11 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/05/2021	Full	Good
18/12/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/10/2019	Full	Inadequate
07/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children's progress and experiences are mixed and have been impacted on by shortfalls in care planning, risk assessing, and a lack of cohesive multi-agency working and planning.

One child has disengaged from the home and education, which has impacted negatively on their progress and experiences. Another child has made good progress in the home and at school and is currently settled. Children have access to education that is relevant to their needs. Communication between the home and school is good and daily handovers share relevant information. The manager has shared support strategies with school staff, which has led to a significant reduction in incidents at school. This has led to one child being more settled.

Children have built positive relationships with the staff, who are nurturing towards them. Children are provided with structure, routines and boundaries designed to help them to feel secure. As a result, children have been involved in less incidents.

Children's day-to-day health needs are met. However, external medical support and advice is not always sought for children's emotional health and well-being. This prevents medical professionals agreeing safety plans and providing additional support to children if needed. Children are offered a healthy menu, but they do not always have a healthy diet.

A range of activities are offered in the home and community. However, the lack of availability of staff and vehicles on occasion prevents children from participating in planned activities. Children are helped to stay in contact with people who are important to them, but plans and risk assessments around this are not regularly reviewed. This has led to inconsistency in arrangements for children to meet friends and family and has contributed to incidents.

Children's care planning is weak. The manager and external professionals have not worked cohesively in agreeing and implementing care plans. Children's plans have not been regularly reviewed and updated. The manager has not raised or escalated concerns to senior managers around shortfalls in the routine reviewing of children's placements, or in response to escalating concerns. As a result, children have not been provided with consistent care because the plans in place do not reflect their needs. An advocate has visited the home to capture a child's views about their care.

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

The quality of risk management is varied. Some risks are not adequately considered or responded to effectively. The manager has not worked cohesively with a multi-agency team in identifying and managing risks associated with children's persistent missing and absence episodes. Concerns have not been escalated to relevant professionals. The plan in place is not effective and has not been consistently followed by staff and external agencies. Staff have a lack of understanding about risks and how best to manage these. This places children at risk of increased harm.

Incidents, apart from missing-from-home episodes, have significantly decreased. The manager has not always had timely oversight of incidents and this delays action being taken in response. Children and staff have opportunities to debrief following incidents. Reflection on practice has been used to develop a better understanding of behaviour management and how best to support children when in crisis. Allegations against staff have been well managed and relevant external professionals have been informed.

Procedures designed to ensure that adults working in the home have had relevant safe recruitment checks prior to working with children have not been consistently followed. Not all agency staff have the relevant information recorded on file, which means the manager has not checked their suitability prior to staff undertaking shifts. This has the potential to expose children to harm from unsuitable adults working with them.

One child has been exposed to bullying outside of the home and online. Staff have supported them to make a complaint to the police and have given them guidance about staying safe online.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The managers are new to their roles and as a result do not yet have a strong understanding of regulations and legislation. This means that some shortfalls have been identified in this inspection. The manager has not consistently had clear oversight, which has allowed for some drift in care planning and risk management. The manager has yet to build strong working relationships with external agencies and in working within a multi-agency team. They were not fully aware of their responsibility in escalating concerns to senior management for additional support.

The manager has a clear vision for the home and in developing a more child-centred ethos. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and have started to implement plans to effect change. As a result, some children have made progress and have responded positively to the new culture.

Most of the staff do not have the relevant qualification for working with children. Not all mandatory training, including safeguarding and first aid, has been undertaken.

Additional training relevant to the needs of the children has not been completed by most staff. Because of this, not all staff have the necessary skills and knowledge required.

The manager is starting to rebuild the team after some instability and high staff turnover. Staff do not have regular supervision meetings with their manager and have not had an annual appraisal. This prevents reflection on working practice and in the development of staff. There has been some staff shortages and, on occasions, children have been cared for by agency staff and casual staff who are not employed at the home full time. This has impacted on the stability of the home at times.

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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to involve the child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child’s needs are met in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (1)(a)(c))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to reviewing a child’s placement and arranging multi-agency meetings in response to incidents and risks.</p>	<p>1 December 2022</p>
<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>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p>	<p>1 December 2022</p>

<p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(b))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to effective risk assessing, working with external professionals, including medical professionals, and following agreed plans to mitigate risk.</p>	
<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> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to staff completing mandatory and specific training relating to the needs of the children and timely management oversight of children’s care and incidents.</p>	<p>1 December 2022</p>
<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 the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if—</p>	<p>1 December 2022</p>

<p>the registered person considers the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs;</p> <p>the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to implementing an agreed plan in response to missing and absence incidents.</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;</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</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) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to the safer recruitment checks for agency staff employed at the home.</p>	1 December 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))</p>	1 December 2022
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	1 December 2022

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: 1236625

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Happy Group (uk) Limited

Registered provider address: West Walk House, 99 Princess Road East, Leicester, Leicestershire LE1 7LF

Responsible individual: Ranjit Bains

Registered manager: Lucille Amoo

Inspector

Sarah Orriss, Social Care Inspector

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