

# 1236916

Registered provider: Utopia Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children.

The manager has been in post and registered with Ofsted since the home registered in June 2016.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

### Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>good</b>
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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:** 21 February 2022

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## **Inspection judgements**

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

Children make progress from their starting points. The three children living in the home have done so for between 18 months and three years. They are supported by a stable team of staff who know the children very well. As a result, the children have developed a good sense of belonging and have formed trusting and positive relationships. One child told the inspectors that they love living in the home and said that it is the best home they have ever lived in because they can be themselves.

Inspectors observed warm and friendly interactions between the children and the staff. Staff demonstrate a particular strength in encouraging and supporting the children to engage in activities and new experiences. For example, the children have experienced their first summer holiday in Spain, going to sports events, and visiting their friends and families without the supervision of the staff. Professionals and a parent who contributed to the inspection are overwhelmingly positive about the children's progress.

When moving into the home, all three children found engaging with education a challenge. In response to this, the manager and the staff have advocated well for the children. As a result, the children attend college or work placements, and these are in part successful. For example, one child successfully completed a GCSE in photography and now has a part-time job. Staff recognise that some of the children continue to struggle to regularly attend college. When this happens, they make determined efforts to support them, and they work with others in finding alternative opportunities.

Individualised plans support staff to help the children to learn the necessary skills to live independently and to keep themselves healthy. All three children are actively engaging with learning in how to be more independent. However, the inspectors noted that one child continues to struggle to engage with health appointments. Plans to support this child's mental health do not provide sufficient strategies to inform and guide the staff.

The children live in a home that is comfortable and mainly homely. Some continued refurbishment is planned, and the manager is considering how the room that is used as an office can be made more homely and inviting.

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

The registered manager and the staff know the children well and identify potential risks and triggers. Plans for reducing these risks are detailed and effective. Since the previous inspection, the risks for the three children have significantly reduced.

Consistent and personalised responses by the staff mean that the children's behaviours are managed well, and there is no use of physical intervention.

Inspectors observed compassionate and proportionate responses from the staff, which are also evidenced in the records. This has resulted in the children learning from their experiences.

Since the previous inspection, the three children enjoy a greater sense of freedom and unsupervised time away from the home. For example, they visit their friends and families, have sleepovers and make good use of public transport, all of which is risk assessed and managed safely.

All professionals who contributed to the inspection are confident that the children are appropriately safeguarded.

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

The registered manager is qualified and manages the home well. He has remained a stable influence in the home since it registered in June 2016. He has a strong commitment to improving the outcomes for the children and leads a team that is equally as dedicated.

The manager has a good presence in the home and supports the staff team well. Staff speak positively about the support, training and supervision they receive. They told the inspectors that they feel valued.

The manager maintains quality relationships with all the professionals involved with the children. An independent reviewing officer spoke highly of the registered manager's communication, which results in them feeling well informed about the children's needs and progress.

The inspectors found evidence of the role the manager and the staff have played in advocating for the children. For example, they have sourced employment for one child and found a local garage to support a child's interest in mechanics.

Monitoring of the home takes place, and the records seen by the inspectors are mainly up to date and comprehensive. The manager routinely seeks feedback from professionals and incorporates this, alongside the views of the children, into the home's development plan. The shortfall recognised by the inspectors that relates to a child's health plan is noted by the manager, and he plans to improve this document.

## What does the children's home need to do to?

### 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 health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that the children's health plans are kept up to date. In particular, they must include strategies to help the staff to support the children to attend all necessary health appointments.</p>	3 January 2023

### Recommendation

- The registered person should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression of the home. This relates specifically to the room that is currently used as an office. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

## **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:** 1236916

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

**Registered provider:** Utopia Children's Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Unit 9, Wheatstone Court, Waterwells Business Park, Davy Way, Gloucester GL2 2AQ

**Responsible individual:** Louis Stuart-Kelso

**Registered manager:** Leon James

## Inspectors

Linda Bond, Social Care Inspector  
Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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