

2517054

Registered provider: Kennedy and Elliott Partnership LLP

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home cares for three children with emotional and social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2020 and is suitably qualified.

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

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are settled and happy. They receive consistent care from a stable, nurturing and friendly manager and staff team. A child said, 'This is my home and staff are like my family. I score the home 11 out of 10.' Other children said, 'I feel loved,' and 'This is the best home I have lived in.'

The manager and staff team are aspirational for children and are positive role models. During the inspection, children and staff were observed chatting, laughing, cooking and shopping together. With staff's unwavering support, children learn valuable life skills and thrive.

Children make good progress in many aspects of their lives. The manager and staff understand the barriers to children's education, for example undiagnosed learning needs and low self-esteem. Staff's collaborative working with schools and social workers helps children to re-engage in their education. Additionally, children who have left school are supported to apply for further training and jobs.

Children are well prepared for moving into and out of the home and they develop a strong sense of belonging. Before children move in, they are invited to visit and meet the staff and children already living in the home. This helps them to become familiar with staff and the day-to-day running of the home. A child who recently left the home said that she was fully prepared for the move and would return to the home if she could. Children often keep in touch with the manager and staff when they leave the home.

The manager and staff talk proudly about the children's achievements and they help them to pursue their interests and discover new talents, for example writing rap songs. As a result, children's confidence increases and they have ambitions and goals for their future.

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

Children feel safe and secure at this home. The manager and staff have an in-depth understanding of each child's needs, vulnerabilities and strengths. Staff's knowledge of the children and ability to build trusting relationships with them are key protective factors.

Staff skilfully promote and support positive behaviour in the home. They use rewards, praise and encouragement to help children to make safer decisions and choices. The use of consequences or physical restraint are extremely rare. The manager and staff proactively help children to learn about risk and how to keep themselves safe. Through regular discussions and training, children are informed about the dangers of substance misuse, going missing from home, knife crime and

gang affiliation. As a result of this, children's safety increases and risks reduce significantly.

In the main, staff respond appropriately when children go missing from home. Staff do their best to keep in touch with children when they are out of the home and they get to know the children's friends. Children's risk assessments and plans clearly outline what action staff must take when children do not return home and there are concerns about their welfare and safety. Despite this, staff do not consistently follow the missing-from-home procedures identified in the children's risk assessments. Inconsistent practice undermines children's welfare and safety and highlights weaknesses in the monitoring of serious incidents in the home.

Independent return home interviews are not being routinely undertaken when children return from being missing from home. When return home interviews are carried out, they are not always effective. The responsibility to arrange return home interviews rests with the placing authority. However, when the arrangements are not working, the manager and staff do not challenge the placing authority to ensure that the arrangements are reviewed.

There has been one allegation made against a member of staff by a child. The records in relation to this allegation failed to provide a clear chronology of the action taken following the child's disclosure. Consequently, it is difficult to evaluate whether the correct safeguarding procedures were followed. Furthermore, the home's allegations policy does not provide staff with the correct information about the investigation process. For example, the policy does not refer to the possibility of staff being suspended.

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

The home is led by an experienced and suitably qualified registered manager. He is ambitious for the home and aspirational for the children. The children are undoubtedly at the centre of his practice and decisions. A child said, 'Trevor is amazing, trust me.'

A stable and diverse staff team provides a good standard of care to the children. The staff team has a broad range of relevant experience, including in foster care and mentoring children at risk of child exploitation. Most staff have, or are working towards, the relevant qualification in residential childcare.

Social workers, teachers and parents have provided positive feedback about the manager and staff team. They report strong partnership working and good communication. However, the manager and staff do not actively pursue outstanding health assessments or appointments to ensure that children get the support and medication that they need.

The home is sufficiently staffed and team working is strong. Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent and knowledgeable staff team. However, not all staff

have received first aid training and, as a result, there have been occasions when there has not been a qualified first aider on shift at the home.

The home's statement of purpose does not provide details of all staff's qualifications and experience. Furthermore, updated copies of this document have not been sent to Ofsted within the required timescale.

Internal and external monitoring of the home lacks rigour. The shortfalls identified at this inspection, for example the poor recording of a serious incident, highlight weaknesses in the manager's and independent person's monitoring systems.

In the main, the home is well maintained and provides children with a comfortable living environment. It is a busy home and some usual wear and tear issues, such as worn carpets, marked walls and broken draws in the freezer, are undermining the homely ethos.

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 each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;</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 (a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must challenge the local authority when they fail to arrange return home interviews for children who go missing from care. In addition, outstanding health assessments and support must be chased up consistently and proactively.</p>	8 December 2022
<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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p>	8 December 2022

<p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(e))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff follow children's risk assessments when children go missing from home; that allegations against staff are reported and recorded appropriately; and that the home's allegations policy is effective.</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the home's statement of purpose details the qualifications and experience of all staff, including the therapist. When updated, a copy must be sent to Ofsted within the required timescale.</p>	8 December 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(b))</p>	8 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home are maintained to a high standard to help sustain a homely and nurturing environment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should seek to improve the monitoring and auditing of serious incidents to ensure that staff are responding to and reporting serious incidents consistently and in line with the children's plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person undertakes a rigorous assessment of the home's safeguarding practice and reflects their findings and analysis clearly in the monthly reports. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2517054

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennedy and Elliott Partnership LLP

Registered provider address: Abacus House, Forest Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 1DX

Responsible individual: Delicia Louis

Registered manager: Trevor Elliott

Inspectors

Marina Tully, Social Care Inspector
Zara Salim, Social Care Inspector

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