

SC487702

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. The home provides care for up to three children who have difficulty managing their emotions and behaviour.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 13 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/07/2021	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and two children have moved in. One child said, 'The day that I moved in, I felt like I was home.' The child who moved out was exceptionally well supported and continues to live locally in a planned move to one of the organisation's supported living homes. The child had options to live nearer to her family; however, she chose to remain supported by the organisation. The child's decision demonstrates that she had a positive experience of the support provided at the home and by the wider organisation.

This is an outstanding home. Staff are acutely aware of how children's adverse experiences affect their behaviour and capacity to form healthy attachments with others. Staff use this understanding to adapt their approaches to each child's individual needs. Consequently, children are provided with enriched care, love and nurture. This is a home in which children thrive and experience sustained improvement in their lives.

Staff are committed in their drive to ensure that children receive good-quality education. Children who move to the home are provided with formal education within days of their arrival. Links with education providers are strong. When children refuse to attend school, staff are tenacious and consistently provide children with opportunities to learn formally and informally. Regular and meaningful discussions are held with children on internet safety, healthy relationships, self-care and curriculum subject matter, such as mathematics and English. This is above and beyond usual care practices.

Staff at this home see opportunity where others may see challenge. One child's health needs increased her anxieties about sitting exams. The manager advocated for the child by liaising with health professionals to gain medical authorisation to sit GCSE exams at home. This type of advocacy has the potential to remarkably improve children's life chances.

One child wants a career as a police officer. The manager arranged for a police constable special officer to visit the home to discuss the child's wishes. Staff are creative and innovative in their delivery of care. Children benefit from increased opportunities that are tailored to their specific needs and preferences. Children's experiences at this home are exceptionally positive.

Staff understand the importance of making memories and making a record of experiences that children and staff have shared together. The home has a family album that contains pictures of all children who have lived at the home. This is shared with the children and helps to show them that they are remembered after they leave the home, not just in pictures but in the staff's memories too.

Children have their friends visit the home and they have friends in the local area. Children are encouraged to lead lives that their peers who are not in care may lead. Staff do not allow children to view their individual situations as barriers to prevent them from doing better. Instead, children are encouraged to use potential barriers as platforms from which to excel from.

Staff have notably improved one child's health needs. Before coming to the home, the child had smoked for four years. Staff supported the child via smoking cessation appointments and gave them intensive support to stop smoking. This is a remarkable achievement.

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

Staff are meticulous in their approach to ensuring that children are well informed about their care. Staff fully involve children in decisions relating to their care and their future. This gives children a sense of empowerment. The home's ethos and approach ensure that children are at the centre of staff's decision-making.

The home's induction programme is rigorous. It has a sharp focus on safeguarding, including exercises for staff relating to legislation and guidance. This ensures that, from the very start, staff understand the importance of safeguarding children.

Staff work proactively to strengthen their relationships with children. Staff use relationship-based practice to reduce risk. When children go missing from the home, staff are tenacious in their attempts to encourage children's safe return. Staff continually search for children, frequently finding them, and use their relationships to encourage them home. Staff know the risks in the local area exceptionally well. Staff's understanding of people and places that are of concern is excellent.

Proactive partnership working with the police has led to the manager compiling substantial information to provide assurances about children's friendship groups. This information is shared with staff. Therefore, staff are acutely aware of the positive and possibly negative influences that children have in their lives.

The staff have a creative approach to reducing children's exposure to risk. Staff provide children with sensory boxes to use as a distraction from self-harm.

Staff do not use restraint and only infrequently use consequences. Staff's relationships with children are the basis from which staff create positive change. It is the strength of these relationships that enables children to feel loved, heard and that they matter. This leads children to begin to establish trust and to make more positive decisions about their lives. When children make decisions that expose them to risk, the strength of relationships with staff enables children to reflect on their decisions without judgement. Staff understand that making mistakes leads to opportunities for learning.

One child's risk relating to unsafe internet use was creatively addressed by the manager. She liaised with the police to request that they deliver internet safety sessions at the child's school. The manager was aware that the child would accept information about internet safety far more comfortably in a group setting. The manager has a positive influence that is felt outside of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager's care practices are exceptional. Her eye for detail, desire to do better and her dedication to the children is clear in her leadership and management of the home. She is tenacious in her approach and an exceptional role model to children and staff. She is well respected by multi-agency partners and the staff team.

The responsible individual and the manager have excellent oversight of the home. The qualitative and quantitative data that they produce is used to assess children's progress. If regression is noted, targeted support is provided to help children. If progress is identified, this is celebrated. The management team has exceptionally good monitoring systems to track progress and identify themes and trends in children's behaviour.

Staff understand the importance of children not being institutionalised and stigmatised. Plans refer to the importance of using child-friendly language. The manager requests that staff say 'catch up' instead of handover, staff sleep-in is 'sleep over', and instead of annual leave staff are to say 'holiday'. There is a clear drive to ensure that the home feels as much like a family home as it can. The emphasis on using considered language demonstrates the manager's understanding of and empathy for the children.

The responsible individual carried out analysis of staff turnover as this was a concern at the beginning of 2022. The findings from this analysis have created positive changes, such as increased pay and improved professional development. These changes have led to improved staff retention. Given the current national shortage of staff in the social care sector, this is an innovative intervention, which has positively affected children's lives.

The home's ethos is fully embedded in the culture of the home. Research-informed approaches are used to excellent effect to meet children's needs. Consequently, risks to children reduce and staff understand the children's behaviour.

The manager is a fierce advocate and ambassador for children. She presents assertive challenge if she believes that other professionals are not providing the services that children need. This ensures that children's rights are respected and they receive the help and support that they are entitled to. Multi-agency collaborative working is a clear and distinct strength of this home.

The manager has met all the requirements and recommendations that were raised at the last inspection.

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: SC487702

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice

Registered provider address: Orchard House, 1 Old Convent Orchard, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3PQ

Responsible individual: Miguel Valerio

Registered manager: Misha Tricker

Inspector

Lianne Bradford, Social Care Inspector

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