

2663221

Registered provider: Holywell Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is operated by a small, private organisation. The home is registered to provide care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager post is vacant. There is an acting manager in post.

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

When children move in to the home, they are welcomed sensitively. However, staff do not always carry out direct work with children once they have moved. As a result of this, children are not given explanations about the children's guide, how to access advocacy services, or how to make a complaint.

There are clear health plans in place in the home, and children living in the home are registered with local health services. Staff advocate on behalf of children, and all health appointments are up to date. Staff carry out direct work with children to support them to learn about and understand their individual health needs.

One child does not currently attend school and has not received any formal education since moving in to the home. The child has an education, health and care plan in place. However, this has not been reviewed for a significant period of time. Concerns relating to education have recently been escalated, but not until several months had passed. As a result, this has reduced the child's opportunities to learn.

Children in the home are making good progress with their social and emotional development. Staff support children to develop skills and strategies to manage their own conflicts and difficult feelings; independence is also promoted. One social worker said, '[Name of child] has made significant progress. There has been a very positive shift in their behaviours. [Name of child] is now on a positive journey.'

The staff know the children well and are invested in the children. Children are supported to build trusting and secure relationships with the adults who are looking after them. During the inspection, staff were observed interacting with children in a very caring and nurturing manner. Children appear to be at ease around staff and enjoy their company. When asked about the home and staff, one child said, 'I really like the home and staff.' When asked how the child would rate the home, the child replied, '10 out of 10'.

Family time is promoted by the staff and facilitated in line with children's individual plans. The staff team ensures that children are supported to work through their feelings and emotions surrounding family time. They quickly identify any anxieties and provide appropriate levels of reassurance; this was observed during the inspection.

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

The acting manager and staff know the children's individual risks and understand them. The risk assessments in place are individual and up to date. However, not all risk assessments address the vulnerabilities for children effectively and do not clearly set out what action should be taken to mitigate these risks. The acting manager has

a clear plan in place to update all risk assessments and has already begun this process, but it is not yet fully embedded.

Children receive help and support to manage their behaviours and feelings safely. Staff communicate well with children and are effective in supporting children to self-regulate. Staff respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable, along with seeking to identify possible triggers to poor behaviour. The home environment is very calm. As a result, physically holding children has not been required.

There is a consequence and reward system in place in the home. The system is used to promote positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour, while supporting children to recognise the effects of their behaviour on themselves or others. Not all consequences are reviewed by the manager. This results in a lack of scrutiny, and it is not always possible to tell whether the consequence imposed has been effective in addressing the behaviours.

Discrepancies around medication are appropriately managed. When alerted to a medication error, the acting manager responded positively. The acting manager completed an internal investigation and was able to identify learning outcomes. A clear action plan was implemented to reduce the likelihood of further medication errors. The staff who were involved also completed additional medication training.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The acting manager has a good level of understanding and knowledge of the children in the home. She understands the importance of recognising achievements, goals and milestones for the children. The acting manager makes good use of progress monitoring plans and can demonstrate the positive impact that living in the home has on children.

The home is suitably staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children. Safer recruitment procedures are routinely followed, staff are suitably vetted, and appropriate inductions are completed with staff. All staff receive ongoing training that includes mandatory training and relevant online focused training.

Staff have been in receipt of regular supervision up until recently. The regularity of supervision has been affected by the sudden resignation of the registered manager. Prior to this, supervisions were regular and in line with the statement of purpose. When supervisions have taken place, staff have been given opportunities to reflect on their practice and the care that they provide to the children. Team meetings also take place regularly. They are reflective and provide staff with opportunities to discuss children, their progress and the running of the home. All team meetings are documented and there are clear records of the discussions that have taken place.

There have been some occasions when children have displayed aggression towards staff. These occasions have been documented within the consequence and reward

system rather than being recorded as an incident. As a result, this affects the acting manager's ability to appropriately monitor patterns and trends linked to incidents.

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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about—</p> <p>the children's guide;</p> <p>how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with; and</p> <p>what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(d)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that when children move in to the home, there is evidence of direct work being completed that covers the children's guide and other relevant topics to the home. This will ensure that their journey into the home is positive.</p>	26 January 2023
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p>	26 January 2023

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement;</p> <p>raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child’s education or training provider and the child’s placing authority;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(vii)(viii))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that challenges around education are escalated sooner to the placing authority to ensure that children are provided with suitable education as quickly as possible.</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>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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p>	<p>26 January 2023</p>

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi))

Specifically, ensure that the children's individual risk management plans provide staff with clear strategies to manage and reduce risk.

Ensure that when children display behaviour that places them or others at risk, these are recorded in an incident report.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 2663221

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Holywell Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Dalton House, 9 Dalton Square, Lancaster,
Lancashire LA1 1WD

Responsible individual: Sabe Connor

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector

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