

1185488

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four children between the ages of eight and 17. The statement of purpose states that the home aims to create a warm, caring environment that is safe and supportive, enabling children to recover from past life experience, build confidence and self-awareness and grow to achieve their full potential.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 March 2023

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: 5 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2021	Full	Good
25/02/2020	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Good
24/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy living in the home. They make happy memories with staff. Staff capture these memories in books for children to cherish in the future. The books are filled with pictures of children on holiday, on trips to football matches and enjoying fun times together.

Children have made progress in the home. The nurturing relationships that staff have with children help them to make progress. Children have key adults that they can talk to, and they know how to make a complaint. Children are able to say goodbye to staff when they leave. One child wanted to spend quality time with a departing staff member and they went on holiday together.

Leaders fight for children's education. For example, leaders challenged the local authority and secured a school placement for one child. When children are out of education, staff encourage them to continue with schoolwork.

Staff understand the children. Detailed and up-to-date plans for children are informative for staff. These plans include the child's history and the views of the child.

Staff help children to have positive relationships with friends and family. Children have made progress in their relationships with their families. Staff work with families to involve them in the care of their children.

New children moving into the home are carefully assessed. Children are helped to move into the home and settle. Managers have promptly reviewed the placement of children with the local authority when they have not settled.

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

Staff know the risks for children. Staff follow well-developed plans to keep children safe when they are missing from home. Managers keep staff up to date with changes in children's plans. Staff share new information promptly and clearly. Children have return home interviews when required and communication with families and external professionals is strong.

Staff manage children's behaviour positively. There are clear plans in place for responding to behaviours that challenge. The plans link to the home's model of care. Staff reward children for following the rules of the home. Staff will use consequences with children when there is damage caused to property. The manager monitors the effectiveness of consequences.

Staff do not use restrictive physical intervention holds. They do occasionally use physical contact to 'block' or 'guide' children. These incidents are well recorded. The

manager scrutinises the practice of staff and holds conversations with children afterwards.

Recruitment practices are good. Managers invite candidates to a practice shift to help them understand the role. Children can give feedback on the potential new staff. Managers have undertaken the relevant safer recruitment checks for agency staff.

Staff know how to keep children safe online. There are clear agreements in place with children around the use of the internet. Staff speak to children about risks online. Staff know how to complete checks on children's devices if this is required. However, these checks are not recorded consistently.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified manager. Staff describe the manager as supportive and extremely available. The manager is highly visible and involved in the children's care.

The manager is due to leave the home shortly. She has sensitively informed children she is leaving. A new manager has been appointed who is known to the children. The handover is well planned between managers to ensure continuity for children.

The manager has good oversight of the home. She has gathered views of stakeholders in preparation for the next quality of care review. She understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home.

Since the last inspection, there has been some turnover of staff. Leaders are aiming to retain new staff. Leaders conduct exit interviews and the recruitment process has been reviewed. When new staff join, they are well inducted into the home and have training to prepare them for their roles. However, some new staff do not have frequent supervision, in line with the home's policy.

Overall, staff have effective support to carry out their roles. Supervision is well structured and focuses on the children and safeguarding. Managers encourage staff to develop their careers. Staff have training specific to the needs of the children. This includes training in autism spectrum disorder and child sexual exploitation.

Other professionals report strong working relationships with staff. Staff communicate with partner agencies effectively. Leaders escalate concerns about children promptly and challenge the local authority when needed. While the home manager reports serious events to the relevant agencies, on occasion, these serious events are not notified to Ofsted.

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>	14 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, 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)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. The registered person should ensure that safety checks are recorded, to allow them to monitor if the procedures are being followed by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)

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: 1185488

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Registered provider address: 5 Theale Lakes Business Park, Moulden Way,
Sulhamstead, Reading, Berkshire RG7 4GB

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Julie Murrell

Inspector

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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