

1256367

Registered provider: Homes 2 Inspire Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company that is owned and operated by a national charity. It provides care for up to five children with complex behaviours and emotional needs. The registered manager has recently left the home.

A new manager has been appointed but has not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 7 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/07/2022	Full	Good
07/07/2021	Full	Good
13/08/2019	Full	Good
28/02/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

There have been considerable changes in this home since the last inspection. Three children have left, and there have been changes in the staff team. Despite these changes, a small core staff team has remained. Children say they can talk to staff about any concerns they may have and enjoy living at this home.

The manager and staff support children to develop their independence skills. They are encouraged to develop life skills and assist with age-appropriate chores, such as washing dishes, doing laundry, going food shopping and preparing meals. However, children say they do not have access to food and drink during the night. Children said that the kitchen is locked at night. This prevents the house from feeling like the children's home. The manager was not aware of the kitchen being locked and will ensure children have access to the kitchen during the night.

The staff undertake regular direct work with children. They talk to them about important issues, such as their identity, relationships, online safety and becoming more independent. Some written records contain the wrong pronoun for some children, which they could find offensive. Although not intentional, this has the potential to have a negative impact on children's self-esteem. The managers are currently supporting staff to develop their use of language to ensure that information is recorded sensitively.

Children have opportunities to engage in activities and clubs in the community that are relevant to their individual hobbies and interests. They are being helped to build social skills and learn about positive social interactions to support them in attending these activities and maintaining positive relationships.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children alerted the organisation to the fact that an agency waking night staff was sleeping while on duty, despite these staff being employed to ensure that children are safe during the night. There was a delay in senior leaders being made aware of the incident, resulting in the staff member completing another night shift in the home before this was investigated. This staff member no longer works at the home. Lessons have been learned from this incident, and children have felt confident to report their worries and concerns, knowing they will be taken seriously.

There has been an increase in the frequency of children going missing from care. This has started to reduce following some children leaving the home. Some records of these events are incomplete and fail to detail whether children received a return home interview. Not all records have been evaluated by the previous manager. The current manager has now started to evaluate records and documents to assure

themselves that all actions have focused on keeping children safe. Additionally, this ensures that patterns and trends are identified to further reduce the associated risks when a child is missing from care.

Poor communication has hampered effective safeguarding. Staff were aware that a child wanted to remove the home's car keys. However, they had not shared their concerns with managers and senior leaders. The child was able to gain access to the car keys and drive the vehicle away. This was investigated by senior leaders, and lessons have been learned, reducing the risk of repeat incidents. The manager and staff have worked closely with the local authority to support the child to move to a new placement.

The manager and staff are developing their approach to behaviour management. They are moving to a more restorative approach. This supports children to learn and be educated, rather than being punished for negative behaviour. Conversations and key-work sessions are used to motivate and support the children to develop a sense of self-worth, leading to improved behaviour.

Children know how to make complaints. Managers respond to these in a thorough and timely manner. They communicate clearly with children about each stage of the process and ensure that they have a record of the outcome. One child said that she has confidence that her worries are taken seriously and resolved.

The location risk assessment is regularly reviewed. This reflects learning and information from incidents that have taken place. The manager seeks the views of the local police and has gained a good understanding of the specific risks to children in the area. The assessment is informative for staff in the event of children going missing from care as it highlights specific risks and vulnerabilities for the children.

The home is generally clean and tidy, although some areas are looking tired. For example, a cupboard in the kitchen had a lock on it that has been removed and looks unsightly. Some cupboards are chipped, and there is evidence of damp on one of the outer walls. A child's bedroom had an area that has been filled, but this is not yet painted. A renovation plan has been developed, and works to take place are imminent.

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

There have been recent changes in management arrangements. An acting manager is in post and is yet to register with Ofsted. She is reflective and honest about the strengths and weaknesses of the team and current practice. She has aspirations for the development of the team and to deliver the improvements required. Staff say they find the manager approachable and supportive. The manager prides herself in being readily available to the children and staff.

Managers and leaders have recognised the need to improve recording. The manager has experienced issues regarding access to information and being able to find what she needs. Information is held in different places, and the electronic recording system has omissions and is sometimes incorrect. This can prevent managers from having the most up-to-date information. Leaders and managers are aware that recording remains an issue and are working with the team to improve this.

Management monitoring and review systems have been poor. The manager has retrospectively reviewed a significant number of records to gain a better understanding of areas for development and to ensure that lessons are learned. She has identified that not all information about children is being documented, for example key-work discussions and general supportive conversations with children. This prevents the effective use of evaluation and analysis to drive improvement. Some progress has been made in the short amount of time that the new manager has been in post. However, systems are not yet embedded.

The manager has good support from the responsible individual, who visits the home often and knows the children and staff well. The manager and senior leadership team acknowledge the improvements required. The responsible individual said, 'We acknowledge improvements are needed and are committed to achieving this.'

The manager models the type of care that she wants to see in the home, and staff are learning through observation. A high proportion of the staff team is relatively new in role. Staff are receiving supervisions; however, these do not include reflective practice, and records are not always a true reflection of discussions held. This prevents lessons from being learned.

Several staff have left recently, and the dynamics in the team have changed. There is a lack of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Not all staff have received training to equip them to meet children's individual needs, for example training on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and identity awareness. Staff from other homes within the organisation are being used daily to cover shortfalls in the rota. However, currently, there is only one vacancy that has not been filled.

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 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>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(b)(d))</p> <p>Managers should ensure that risk assessments include all required information and provide guidance to staff on how to manage risk. This also relates to the adequate supervision of children to prevent children from placing themselves at risk.</p>	29 May 2023

<p>It also relates to the maintenance needs of the home being addressed.</p>	
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(h))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to staff receiving relevant training, and the manager embedding monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	<p>26 June 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>29 May 2023</p>

This specifically refers to improving file management and ensuring that records are completed fully, with attention being paid to detail, accuracy and filing them correctly.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides the opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. The home should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, helping children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. This relates to consequences being punitive. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, 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. This is in relation to the poor quality of supervision records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This is in relation to managers ensuring that the correct pronoun is used in records made about children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person must ensure, just as in a family home, that children are able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home. This is in relation to ensuring that children have access to food and water at night. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: 1256367

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes 2 Inspire Limited

Registered provider address: Lumonics House, Valiant Office Suites, Valley Drive, Swift Valley Industrial Estate, Rugby CV21 1TQ

Responsible individual: Daniel Thompson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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