

1232650

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties. There were two children living at the home at the time of inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 August 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: 3 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/10/2022	Full	Good
12/10/2021	Full	Good
21/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
22/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy to live here. They build positive relationships with staff and feel cared for. One child said, 'It's like having ten mums.' Another child said that living in the home was the first time in a long time they felt like part of a family.

The environment is homely and welcoming. Children's rooms are personalised appropriately, and photos of the children are in communal areas as well as their own rooms.

Some children make good progress in education. One child has continued to receive additional tutoring to support him to sit his exams. Another child has completed his course and now plans to move on to the next level. The manager advocates for the children to receive appropriate support to engage with education.

Staff celebrate children's achievements and reward them appropriately. This encourages children to achieve their goals and promotes positive behaviour. Children know that staff are proud of what they achieve.

Children are supported and encouraged to pursue their interests and explore their identity. For one child, this included ensuring they could attend religious services of their choice. Staff ensured the child had the correct clothing to wear to the services. They also found local restaurants that serve food to meet the child's dietary needs. This helps children to gain a sense of belonging.

Children's health needs, including their emotional well-being, are prioritised. Staff offer the children support and encouragement to seek advice from health professionals, such as the GP, specialists and counsellors, when this is in the children's best interests. Recommendations from statutory health assessments are followed up appropriately.

Children have individual independence plans that align with their needs and goals. Plans include important skills such as budgeting, travelling and cooking. This supports children to be prepared to move on to the next step in their journey.

Staff support children who move on to help them settle into their new home. This helps children feel valued, and relationships are maintained in an appropriate way.

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

Staff are skilled at building positive relationships with the children. They use these relationships to support children when they are in crisis. This means that physical intervention is not needed.

Children feel that staff keep them safe. Professionals working with the children agree that staff take relevant action to keep children safe. When children have been at risk of exploitation, staff have not always been able to keep them safe but have escalated concerns and shared information with other safeguarding professionals.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns. Staff feel confident in raising concerns and understand whistle-blowing procedures.

When children go missing from home, staff follow the procedures. They make efforts to locate the children and encourage them to return home. Staff contact the police when this is appropriate. Concerns about the safety of children who go missing from home are escalated appropriately. When children return home, staff ensure that an independent return home interview takes place.

Risk assessments identify appropriate risks and the actions staff should take. Permanent staff have good knowledge of the required actions. However, documents are repetitive and long. This means staff who do not know the children well may not understand what actions need to be taken to keep them safe.

All staff are employed following a safer recruitment process. If agency staff are required, they work alongside permanent staff to reduce any impact on children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is a matriarch figure and understands the needs of the children well. She maintains positive relationships with the children and staff.

The manager has proactively built strong working relationships with the local police to ensure that children's safety is prioritised. This has led to the police attending the home to provide additional training for staff.

The manager has good oversight and reviews children's documents regularly. However, the oversight lacks evaluation. Opportunities to reflect on practice and drive forward improvement are missed.

There is a full team of staff, almost all of whom are appropriately qualified. They are committed to children and genuinely express love and care for them. Staff and the manager offer children stable relationships and are committed to their needs.

The suitability and location of the home have been reviewed. However, the manager has not sought up-to-date consultation with partner agencies. This limits her ability to ensure children are kept safe within the local area and make sure any specific plans are put in place.

The independent person's reports are not always received on time, and the quality of the information is not always consistent. This prevents the regulator from having a timely and good-quality overview of the safeguarding and well-being arrangements for the children.

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, The 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 review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))</p>	1 December 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that information about children's risks is clear and relevant, with plans that can be understood and followed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. Reports should be of good quality and produced in a timely way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 1232650

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 7 Tenter Lane, Warmsworth, Doncaster, Yorkshire
DN4 9PP

Responsible individual: Thomas Worthington

Registered manager: Christine Cracknell

Inspector

Joanna Beal, Social Care Inspector

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