

SC439535

Registered provider: Pebbles Care 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 five children with social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2013.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 29 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 29/06/2022 | Full | Good |
| 20/01/2022 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 25/02/2020 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 04/09/2019 | Interim | Improved effectiveness |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have secure relationships with staff that they trust. They talk to the staff about the things that are important to them. Children feel safe in the home as the staff are nurturing and provide consistent warmth.

Children are supported to receive education, and they make good progress. The manager and staff work well with education professionals to create timetables that are aimed at increasing the children's school attendance and engagement. Two children are now in college, and they have held several part-time employment roles.

Children are supported to increase their independence skills. Additional support is given to each child to ensure that this is a staged process. Children are given responsibility over time to build their confidence while they are kept safe.

The manager and staff advocate well for the children. The staff work with others to address and overcome barriers such as bullying, and they promote a sense of resilience and confidence in the children. Children who live far away from their home town are supported well to engage with independent advocates. This supports the children to have a voice.

Children are healthy, and they are supported to attend their appointments. Specific support has been sought for children when needed. Psychology and therapy provided by professionals both form the basis of emotional support plans for the children. Staff receive consultative support from these professionals. This aids with the staff's understanding and the work that they carry out with the children they care for.

Children feel heard and know how to make a complaint. However, one child's complaint was not managed in line with the home's own safeguarding procedures. This means that the complaint was not escalated to the appropriate agencies and discussed in line with the local safeguarding protocols.

Children's experiences of moving in or out of the home have been poor. While the manager has attempted to facilitate the appropriate steps, the children's moves have been quick and have not been completed at the child's pace.

Children are prevented from accessing all areas of their home. The lounge and kitchen are locked on a regular basis at night. There is no safeguarding reason for this to be in place, and it has been common practice for some time.

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

Children feel safe. They trust and have good relationships with the staff, who do their best to keep the children safe. Staff understand the children's vulnerabilities and risks and what action they must take to better protect the children from harm. The manager and staff work well with all agencies to ensure the safety of the children. The manager maps all of the known locations where the children go and the people they associate with when they are away from the home or go missing. This ensures that this information is readily available and can be used to locate the children quickly when they go missing from the home and may be at risk of harm.

Children's care plans and risk assessments are clear, up to date and help to keep the children safer. These documents provide the staff with the actions that they must follow. This has supported some children in becoming increasingly safe.

When risk-taking behaviour or conflict occurs between the children, the staff support the children to understand their emotions, the impact of their behaviour and how to manage future events. Children adhere to established structures and routines that support their sense of living in a safe environment.

The staff carry out room searches in collaboration with the children and their social workers. When items are found, the children are involved and helped to understand the risks associated with these items and why they may be removed.

The manager advocates well for the children. She challenges other agencies appropriately, and she escalates her concerns and raises complaints when children do not receive the services that they require. When the children's risk-taking behaviours are not recognised as high-risk by external agencies, the manager intervenes to ensure that the children receive a response that keeps them safe.

The manager immediately informs the relevant authorities of child protection concerns when she deems it necessary. When concerns about the staff's practice arise, these are referred to the relevant agency in line with the local safeguarding procedures. However, on one occasion, the manager did not deem it necessary to make a referral to the local authority designated officer. This prevents external safeguarding agencies scrutinising the practice of staff to ensure that the children are better protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by an experienced and qualified registered manager. The staff receive a thorough induction programme, attend probation reviews and receive training to meet the children's needs. There are appropriate checks in place to ensure that the children receive care from staff who are suitable.

The staff are trained to meet the historic and developing needs of the children. The manager seeks specific training when the children's behaviour changes or concerns arise for the children. This ensures that the staff feel confident and have the knowledge to respond appropriately to the children.

The manager's review and monitoring systems are in depth and cover all of the reporting and recording systems. The manager uses this as a driver for the progress that the children make as the staff work in line with the children's plans.

The manager completes regular and effective supervision sessions with the staff. Staff feel supported, and their well-being is promoted. When relationships are strained, the manager intervenes quickly to ensure that a pleasant working environment continues.

The staff are knowledgeable, and they are aware of the children's current and historic experiences. The manager places the therapeutic model of practice at the centre of meetings and the children's plans that flow from it.

The manager has missed an opportunity to improve her consultation with the children, their parents and other stakeholders. This oversight hinders her ability to improve the quality of care children receive.

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 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>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>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> | <p>24 October 2023</p> |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p> | <p>24 October 2023</p> |

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any individual who is 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. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all of the staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. This supervision should allow 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: SC439535

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pebbles Care Limited

Registered provider address: 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

Responsible individual: David Hitchen

Registered manager: Kimberley Crabtree

Inspectors

Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

Janine Shortman-Thomas, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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