

1027158

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to six children. The children may have had traumatic experiences that have left them vulnerable.

The manager registered in May 2021.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 6 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2023	Full	Good
12/10/2021	Full	Good
19/11/2019	Full	Good
10/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living at this home make exceptional progress, enjoy wonderful experiences and establish incredibly strong bonds with staff. Staff have genuine love, care and aspirations for children. Staff make this home a home away from home. Children and adults experience an extremely warm and nurturing environment.

Five children live at the home. No one has left or joined the home since the last inspection.

Professionals unanimously said that staff enthusiastically support children's education. Staff encourage children to attend their educational provisions and celebrate their educational achievements. There is excellent liaison between education providers and the staff. At the last inspection, one child's educational engagement was poor. Since the last inspection, this child has made remarkable progress in his educational attendance and engagement. The one child who is not in education has been supported by staff to apply for jobs.

Staff engage with and entertain the children especially well. Children attend a variety of fantastic activities, such as sea cadets, quad biking, surfing, and go-karting. Staff take children on holiday to other parts of the United Kingdom and abroad. One child was taken to Spain. This was the child's first holiday abroad and their first time on a plane. While in Spain, the child got to swim with dolphins. Children go on holidays in small pairings and groups. This allows staff to provide children with individualised experiences that are tailored to their interests. Such trips broaden children's experiences and build their self-esteem. For some children, they have made memories that will last a lifetime.

Children benefit from having a consistent staff team that supports their every need. Staff have exceptionally positive interactions with the children. Children thoroughly enjoy the company of staff. Children and staff laugh together, play together, and demonstrate affection towards one another. This creates an environment that is like that of a loving family home.

The staff are highly creative in their approach. One child questioned why a member of staff had a hearing aid. Staff used this questioning to discuss disability, including the children's own health needs. Staff do not see challenges, they see opportunities to engage and inform children.

Staff provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that build their independence and prepare them for their adult lives. Children are encouraged to manage their own medication and cook their own food, and one child was supported to take a theory test to prepare him for a driving test. Such opportunities, combined

with the strong and trusting relationships that they have developed, increase children's potential to succeed when the time comes to leave the home.

**How well children and young people are helped and protected:
outstanding**

Children are considerably safer as a result of the excellent care and support that the staff and manager provide. Staff respond, manage and resolve safeguarding concerns to excellent effect. The manager works collaboratively with professionals to ensure that information is shared swiftly. Known concerns are quickly attended to in order to keep children safe. The manager uses these experiences to improve practice and make changes that improve safeguards.

Staff have an exceptional understanding of how children's feelings and experiences underpin their behaviours. As a result, staff provide targeted support to address previous trauma. This allows children to gain improved control over their own emotions, behaviours and, ultimately, their lives.

Since the last inspection, the use of physical intervention has reduced by almost half. Incidents have also considerably reduced. This is testimony to the highly skilled staff using their understanding of and relationships with children to help them to feel safe and secure. Consequently, children are better equipped to manage overwhelming feelings in healthier ways.

The home's safeguarding champion makes an impressive contribution to the home. He meets with other safeguarding leads across the wider organisation. He cascades important, relevant and up-to-date information to the wider staff team and is a valuable source of learning. The safeguarding champion has also shared the findings from serious case reviews with the staff team. This broadens staff's understanding and helps staff to build on their already strong safeguarding practice.

The organisation's therapist provides the team with regular input related to research-informed practice. As a result, staff have an excellent understanding of trauma, attachment difficulties and neurological divergence. This helps staff to achieve remarkably strong bonds with children. Consequently, children feel emotionally held by the staff.

Staff routinely discuss online safety with the children. Staff use modern technology to their advantage. Two children who are permitted quite extensive free time, have apps on their phones that allow staff to locate them. Children have agreed to staff using the apps for these purposes. This gives staff a greater sense of security, knowing where the children are when they are away from the home.

Staff are not afraid to tackle sensitive subjects with the children. Staff have discussed rape, consent, misuse of power, and sexual abuse. Staff use these discussions to empower children and develop their knowledge. Consequently, children's increased understanding encourages them to make positive choices in their own lives.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Exceptionally strong leadership and management help to create an environment in which children and staff flourish. The manager is highly respected by professionals and the staff team. Children are extremely fond of her, and this is reciprocated. The manager's influence and approach have created a nurturing and loving environment in which children make excellent progress.

The manager was not in attendance at the inspection. However, this did not affect the inspection or the running of the home. The systems and practice in the home are fully embedded, understood and executed effectively by the staff team.

The children's views, wishes and feelings are central to the running of the home. Children have a sense of belonging, feel heard by staff, and feel loved. This empowers children to have a voice. For some children, this is the first time in their lives that they feel that what they say matters.

The manager routinely collaborates with other professionals to ensure that children's needs are met. Feedback from professionals indicates that the manager consistently has the children's needs at the front and centre of her decision-making. At the last inspection, one child's needs were exceeding what the staff could sufficiently support. However, the manager and the staff did not give up on this child. They continued to provide safety, security and boundaried care. Consequently, the child has made extraordinary progress, which he and his social worker fully recognise. The child's social worker said 'the transformation in him [child] is remarkable'.

Placement plans and risk assessments are exceptionally detailed, reflective of guidance from the organisation's therapists, and clearly outline the support required for the children. The manager regularly reviews and evaluates risks and the strategies in place to manage them. The records give clear guidance to staff, detailing how to reduce the risks to children. The records match the staff's understanding and are reflective of the practice in the home.

Internal monitoring systems are excellent. The person who is responsible for the monthly monitoring of the home has exceptional relationships with the children. Children enjoy spending time with her and feel safe to confide in her. This external monitoring adds an additional layer of safety. The strength of her relationships with the children allows them to share their experiences of care with her freely.

All three requirements raised at the last inspection have been met.

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: 1027158

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Unique Care Homes Support Limited

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Dean Mayes

Registered manager: Sarah Mansi

Inspector

Lianne Bradford, Social Care Inspector

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