

1240936

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have experienced childhood trauma.

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since 28 April 2023.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 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: 18 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/10/2022	Full	Good
05/05/2021	Full	Good
20/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
23/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from individualised care from a committed staff team. This has helped children to develop trusting and positive relationships with staff. As a result, children remain settled and make good progress in all aspects of their lives. One child told the inspector, 'Living at the home is sound.'

At the time of inspection, three children were living at the home. One child has experienced a planned move into the home since the last inspection. The child has settled well, developed their sense of belonging in the local area and made friends. However, the child does not agree with their care plan. The manager and the child's advocate have supported the child to share their views with the wider professional network.

Staff receive relevant training to understand children's health needs. They are also guided by the organisation's therapeutic team to inform their practice. Children are supported to access routine and specialist health appointments. This means children's physical and emotional health needs are monitored and managed well.

Children's education is prioritised and promoted by staff. Two children attend specialist education settings and are making good progress. One child attends college and has developed their ability to speak English more fluently. They can effectively communicate with other children in the home, staff and members of the public. This has led to an increase in the child's confidence and self-esteem.

The manager and staff support children to develop their independence skills in line with their plans. Children learn to buy and prepare their own meals and clean their bedrooms. They also plan activities and manage their finances. One child attends sporting events independently. This is in line with their interests and aspiration to be a professional sportsperson. One child struggles to engage with formal work around their independence. Staff have been creative and delivered this in more informal ways. This good support equips and prepares children for their future when they leave the home to live more independently.

Children have weekly meetings with staff to share their views and plan their week ahead. They can also make requests for any additional items or equipment they need. These requests are then considered by the manager, but it is not always clear if feedback is given to the children. This does not help children to understand their contribution and how it has been valued by staff. The manager acknowledges this and has plans in place to improve this.

The home is spacious and well maintained. Children have personalised their bedrooms. Since the last inspection, improvements and upgrades have been made to improve the presentation of some areas of the home.

Staff understand and promote children's identities. Children spend time with people who are important to them. One child attends their place of worship with staff. Another child is increasingly comfortable and confident about their sexual identity. This helps children to feel proud of who they are and to respect difference and diversity.

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

Children are encouraged to take risks appropriate to their age and level of understanding. Risks are identified, understood and managed well by staff. This is underpinned by clear risk management plans that provide staff with guidance about actions to take to reduce the risk of harm. These plans are updated following any significant events or when there are new concerns.

Staff encourage children's positive behaviours through good routines, boundaries, praise and incentives. When staff are required to physically intervene, they do this as a last resort and to keep children safe. This is done proportionately and recorded appropriately. The manager has oversight of this so they can continue to improve care and practice for children.

Two children share a difficult relationship at times. This is due to their evolving individual needs. They are appropriately challenged by staff when there is conflict between them. Children receive good support to help them learn and reflect on their actions. This has led to fewer incidents between them.

One child has struggled with their emotional well-being. This has led to them harming themselves. There is a robust safety plan in place, and the child can let staff know how they are feeling. This has been effective and enabled staff to increase levels of supervision when required. The child has gradually been able to use strategies they have learned from specialised therapeutic support. This has led to the child making safer decisions and speaking more openly about their lived experiences. This good progress has resulted in the child feeling safer and not harming themselves as often.

The manager has responded appropriately and in a timely manner when children have made allegations. This good practice safeguards children while investigations are completed. As a result, children are reassured that staff will listen and act on any concerns they have.

Procedures around the storage and administration of medication are thorough. Staff undertake daily audits, and the manager undertakes weekly audits. The manager has a robust system in place to ensure that procedures are being followed.

Recruitment processes are robust. Staff who work in the home are subject to all necessary checks. This helps to ensure that children receive care from safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and responsible individual are ambitious for children. They have high aspirations for children to achieve their full potential. The manager is well supported by a deputy manager. Together, they know the children very well and have strong relationships with them.

There was a significant incident involving a member of staff. This affected staff morale at the time. Leaders and managers have worked hard to address this. A staff development day, additional training and increased support have improved morale. Staff speak positively about the support they receive from the manager. Staff have a well-planned induction process, training and regular team meetings. One parent asked the inspector to commend the staff team for the care their child receives.

The manager provides staff with annual appraisal meetings. This helps staff to understand their progress and development. The manager ensures that staff have regular supervision meetings in line with the organisation's policy. However, the records of these meetings are not detailed enough to help staff understand what was said and agreed.

The manager has improved their process of reviewing the risks presented by the local area. They have consulted with relevant professionals. They have also incorporated feedback from children in the home regarding their knowledge of the community. The manager therefore has a more detailed understanding of potential risks to the children in the home and has strategies to manage them.

Good monitoring and auditing systems help the manager to track children's progress and prepare the required quality of care review reports effectively. In addition to this, there has been a change in the home's independent visitor. This has led to an improvement in the quality of visits and reports. When professionals have not provided feedback, leaders and managers have escalated this appropriately. This has helped the manager to use this information to improve the quality of care for children.

Professionals speak positively about the staff and the manager. Their feedback reflects the progress children make while living in the home and that children are kept safe and well.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- 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. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, ensure it is clear how information is fed back to children after children's meetings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should 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. In particular, ensure that records of staff supervision are clear and sufficiently detailed to reflect discussions that have taken place. ('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: 1240936

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, Lancashire
OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Kirsty Robinson

Registered manager: Melanie Wakelam

Inspector

Nurul Kabir, Social Care Inspector

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