

SC487702

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company operates this home. The home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since 26 July 2023. A new manager was appointed in August 2023 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 December 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 5 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2022	Full	Outstanding
13/07/2021	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. Since the last inspection, three children have moved out and three children have moved in. Staff supported one child to move to alternative accommodation provided by the organisation to meet this child's growing needs for a more independent setting. Another child wished to live closer to their home and staff supported a move to help this child live in their local area again.

Children's moves in and out of the home are well considered by leaders and managers. A social worker said that their child's move into the home was planned effectively and there was 'real dedication' from the staff to get to know the child. When children move out, the responsible individual collates detailed reports to understand the reasons why and what the home could have done differently to support children. The manager and staff take forward learning from these events. In addition, staff keep in regular contact with children after they leave. This helps children to feel valued at times of change.

One child is enrolled in school, but refuses to attend. The other child, who recently moved in, is enrolled at a local school to begin at the start of the next term, in January 2024. The manager actively advocated for a school setting for this child from the point that they moved in, in October 2023. This child's social worker said that delays in accessing a suitable education provision were through 'no fault of the home'. This child has high aspirations for their future career. Despite children not yet receiving formal education in a registered school setting, staff regularly complete independence skills training with children and use other accredited skills programmes to provide children with interim education support. This helps children to continue to gain new skills and prepares them for their return to education.

Staff support children's health needs. Staff encourage children to take their prescribed daily medication. However, sometimes, children choose not to take it. The manager was an effective advocate when one child experienced a medication shortage. The manager explored multiple options between different pharmacies and GPs to find an alternative solution. This ensured that the child did not experience an unnecessary medication change or loss.

Staff support children to engage in a variety of experiences including trips to theme parks, ice skating and escape rooms. This gives children the chance to experience new things. Staff build regular activities into children's routines to support staff-child relationships. Staff regularly consult children about these choices and there are clear records which demonstrate that children's views are listened to about their activity and care plan choices.

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

Some children who have lived at the home have experienced risks when spending time in their community. Despite the frequency of one child being missing from care, staff remained dedicated in their responses to keeping this child safe. Missing-from-care responses for children included dynamic risk assessment, targeted searches of the local area, successful links with local police and transport police, and creative safety plans that involve children and their families. The proactive safeguarding practice adopted by staff included the collation of extremely detailed local area intelligence, which contributed to children being found and returned home safely. Overall, the home's response to children missing from care is informed by evidence-based research. This places significant emphasis on relationship-based practice with children and how these relationships encourage children to return home.

Staff spend time with children getting to know how they would like to be supported at times of distress. One child said that staff recognised behaviours in them before they recognised it in themselves. This relationship-based practice helps children to feel seen and understood. Children are learning to communicate their feelings and receive additional support through sensory boxes, feelings boards and targeted conversations. The superior support that staff provide helps children to manage their behaviour and feelings in safer ways.

Children rarely need to be held to keep themselves safe. Since the last inspection, there has only been one episode of restraint, which was required to stop children hurting each other. The manager swiftly reviewed the record and this included debriefs with the staff and children. Children were helped to understand why this happened, and staff used restorative conversations with children to help them rebuild their peer relationships. Good oversight allows leaders to learn from these events and consider how to better support children at times of distress.

Staff regularly praise children and record daily positive behaviour to help children feel that even their smallest achievements are recognised. This helps children to build a more positive sense of identity where they can achieve good things. Consequences for children are rarely used. On the few occasions that consequences are used, these are always timely and proportionate and are clearly explained to children to help them understand and learn from their behaviour. Instead of consequences, staff focus on building relationships and earning trust and respect with children, as staff said their positive relationships promote more positive behaviour from children.

The recruitment of staff follows safe practice. The manager works with the local authority designated officer (LADO) when concerns about staff practice are raised. The LADO's view is that the home responds appropriately to concerns raised. Potential concerns are well considered by the manager, effective risk assessments are put in place and there is effective communication with multi-agency partners to reduce risk.

Leaders and managers have good links with other local agencies and professionals. Leaders evidence regular contact with local agencies. Feedback received by the home shows that these professionals value the relationships when their diligent information sharing improves safety planning for children at risk while in their community. Children's family members and social workers said that they have good communication with staff and the manager. These effective communication efforts and information-sharing practices help to keep children safer.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, the previous registered manager has progressed to the role of the responsible individual for this home. There was a planned succession for a new manager to join the home and register with Ofsted. However, unforeseen circumstances meant that this new registered manager left within six months, in July 2023. Another manager was then appointed in August 2023.

The current manager submitted their application to register with Ofsted in October 2023. The application is in progress pending receipt of required checks. The manager does not yet hold a recognised qualification in leadership and management, but has enrolled on a course to gain this qualification. Despite the changes in leadership since the last inspection, the responsible individual has sustained good oversight of the home.

The manager has participated in an intensive induction process in their first three months of joining the service. Senior leaders and the responsible individual have supported this well. This training has included weekly management training sessions that support the ethos of the service. The responsible individual has provided fortnightly comprehensive supervisions to the manager to support his move into the role. This level of support has helped to maintain consistency for the staff and children at the home.

Staff said they receive 'impressive' training and good support through regular supervisions. Staff supervisions cover a variety of topics including staff well-being, children's needs and reflective time to explore different theoretical approaches each month. Staff described how the use of theory helps them to think about their interactions with children. This helps to improve the care and support children receive from well-trained and supported staff.

Leaders and managers use effective tools to track the progress that children are making in their care. The responsible individual champions the use of research-informed practice to understand children's needs.

Leaders ensure that children's plans are written to suit children's individual needs and understanding. The responsible individual encourages staff to use language in their reports that does not stigmatise or institutionalise children. This helps children to feel treated with empathy and respect.

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: SC487702

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Registered provider address: Orchard House, 1 Old Convent Orchard, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3PQ

Responsible individual: Misha Tricker

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Rebecca Hannell, Social Care Inspector

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