

2585102

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2023.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 January 2024

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| 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: 24 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 24/05/2022 | Full | Good |
| 02/03/2022 | Interim | Declined in effectiveness |
| 10/08/2021 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home cares mainly for children aged between 14 and 17 who need help to manage their emotions and behaviour. The manager and staff focus on building positive, secure and trusting relationships with the children to support progress and positive outcomes.

Before children move into the home, the manager spends time with them; they are invited to visit the home to meet the staff and any other children living in the home. The manager gains information about the child's needs from the child, their carers/parents and social worker. The information is detailed and informs the staff of any known risks and vulnerabilities. As a result, staff can provide children with the individual care and support they need. When children move out of the home, this is equally well planned. For example, staff provided ongoing support to one child and their parent and gradually reduced their support, ensuring that the new living arrangements were successful.

Children's belongings, games and instruments are freely accessible around the home and are not restricted to their bedrooms. This means that children are happy to spend time in shared areas around the house with staff and other children. The staff are welcoming to others who visit the home, adding to the homely feel.

Children make excellent progress, even when living in the home for a short period of time. Staff equip children to learn how to self-regulate their feelings and manage difficult emotions and they support them to respond in a more positive way. As a result, children's emotional well-being improves.

Some staff are new to the home. Their relationships with the children are built gradually, by spending time with them, sharing meals that the children have often cooked, and getting to know them at their pace. Children have established relationships with the staff who have been at the home for a longer period of time. All staff provide unwavering support to the children through their times of difficulty, while providing consistent guidance and boundaries to ensure that children feel safe and secure.

The children are not currently attending school. However, the staff are doing all they can to support the children back into education and they are working with relevant professionals to identify suitable provision. Despite children not being in school, there are clear routines and structures in place for children during the day. Staff encourage children to complete schoolwork and engage with tutors.

Children enjoy a range of activities that are individual to their likes and interests. They enjoy time with their friends and others who are important to them. Children invite their friends to their house, spend time with them in the community or spend time at their friends' homes.

Children are accepted for who they are and their identity is supported without judgement. Bullying and discrimination are not tolerated in the home and staff respond appropriately if concerns arise.

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

Staff have good strategies in place to help keep children safe and these are clearly set out in individual risk assessments. Staff do not use physical interventions to manage children's behaviour. They use their relationships with children to discuss any worries or concerns the children may have. Children say they feel safe and that the staff support them appropriately.

Staff are inquisitive about new friendships and relationships that children have. They meet any new friends and invite them to the home and get to know their families. Staff teach children about positive relationships and are open and transparent about teaching children to keep safe in relationships; they include the children's partners in these discussions to improve their knowledge.

Missing-from-home incidents significantly reduce for children when they become settled living in the home. When children do go missing from home, staff respond appropriately and creatively to support children to return home safely. Staff identify safe spaces that children go to should they wish to be met before returning home, and safe words so they can alert staff discreetly should they need their help. Children do not routinely have independent return home interviews and the manager and staff have not consistently requested these or challenged the placing local authority when they have not taken place. However, staff have a full understanding of why children go missing from home and support them well to reduce such incidents.

If concerns arise around online safety, staff are responsive and discuss this with the children and explain the risks. Staff and the children have positive relationships with the local police community support officer, who carries out additional work with the children to enhance their knowledge and help keep them safe from harm.

Staff work collaboratively with other agencies, such as child and adolescent mental health services, to provide tailored care and support to children. Staff remain calm when children become upset or distressed or harm themselves. This helps children to feel safe and they can seek support from staff when they feel unable to manage their emotions. A social worker said their child could see that staff were not scared of their intense feelings, which has helped the child to develop trusting relationships with staff.

Staff know how to respond to risks and understand safeguarding protocols to keep children safe. Safeguarding allegations are infrequent. When allegations are made, the manager takes appropriate action and notifies relevant agencies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager knows the children extremely well and understands their needs. She speaks warmly and enthusiastically about the children; she is proud of their achievements and has high aspirations for them. She is well supported by the responsible individual, who previously managed the home.

The staff are a relatively new team, with limited prior care experience. However, the manager and responsible individual lead the team well. They provide a detailed induction, role modelling practice and providing support and guidance through supervision and team meetings, with a focus on reflective practice. This is effective and enables staff to confidently care for the children and meet their needs.

The manager's systems for monitoring and evaluating practice in the home are effective. Staff are supported through reflective practice and a learning approach to continually improve the quality of care in the home.

Staff are positive about the manager and the support she provides. Staff develop in their roles and they are supported to progress and expand their knowledge and skills. Staff have the required training to meet the children's individual needs.

The manager is open and transparent in sharing information with children and their wider support networks. She values feedback to reflect and learn to ensure the best outcomes for the children. Children's views are central to decision-making. Children are involved in their care planning and staff advocate for the children's wishes and feelings to be heard.

The manager and staff have positive relationships with external professionals and the children's families. Professionals and parents recognise the positive progress children make. A social worker said their child has made 'so much progress' during their time at the home and felt that staff advocate for the child and keep them safe.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should request that the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview when they return to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

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: 2585102

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: Bethany Flack

Registered manager: Tracy Wing

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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