

SC424759

Registered provider: Harmony Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care and support for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties and learning difficulties.

There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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 requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2023	Full	Good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
12/06/2019	Full	Good
25/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy spending time with staff who provide stability and routine. During the inspection children were having fun with staff in the home making dens. These positive relationships help children to trust the adults who provide care for them.

Staff fully understand the children's health needs. They are clear about children's starting point, and they have helped the children to make progress. Staff also support the children to develop their self-care and independence skills. One child said, 'Staff walked with me to school, but now I have learned to walk there safely on my own.'

Staff work consistently to ensure that they follow children's specific diets that are in line with their health care plans. This has led to children's health improving significantly as they now follow, and maintain, a healthier lifestyle. This has helped children to grow in confidence and has improved their self-esteem.

All the children who live in the home are in education and are making progress. There is a multi-agency response when there are barriers to children's learning. The manager attends meetings with children's social workers, and school staff to discuss changes to plans. This has resulted in the child receiving additional support in lessons so that they can now cope better in the classroom environment.

Staff are well equipped to meet the children's complex health needs. Parents trust the staff to care for their children when their medical needs change suddenly. A nurse who supports the staff in the home said, 'The staff manage [child's name] really well, they have come on leaps and bounds.'

Parts of the home are not welcoming. The carpets in the children's bedrooms and lounge are marked and dirty. One child's bedroom carpet has scorch marks caused by a child who previously lived in the home. There are marks on the living room walls and in one child's bedroom. One child's bedroom has broken furniture, and in another bedroom, there are dirt marks on the side of the bed frame. These have not been repaired or cleaned in a timely manner. During the inspection, the responsible individual assured the inspector that these concerns will be addressed without delay.

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

High staffing levels mean that children do not go missing from the home. Staff are aware of the protocols in place that should be used, should children go missing from the home. This guidance also directs the staff on how to locate children as quickly and safely as possible if they are missing.

The staff use physical restraints to ensure the safety of the children, staff and others. These holds are reviewed by leaders and managers to ensure that they are

proportionate and safe. After an incident, the manager speaks with the children and staff to explore their experience of this practice. This offers all involved a chance to reflect, and learn from the incident.

Despite the health needs of some children, which place restrictions on their daily activities, the staff are committed to ensuring that children lead a full and active life. The staff understand that children need to learn to take appropriate risk, and they encourage children to take part in activities, such as horse riding, go-karting and trampolining.

Staff revisit the important discussion about keeping safe online to children. This means that children are reminded of safety messages to help keep themselves safe while accessing the internet.

Some of the children's risk assessments provide staff with actions to take to reduce the risk of harm to the children. Nevertheless, the children and staff are not provided with clear guidance on the expectations about children entering each other's bedrooms, as there are no risk assessments for this. The lack of guidance means that children receive an inconsistent response from staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The new manager started on 1 February 2024, and they are in the process of registering with Ofsted. The manager is supported by the service manager who provides her with guidance and supervision sessions, while she develops her managerial role.

Children do not receive care from staff who hold the required childcare qualification. Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that long-standing staff, who have been in post for more than two years, have completed the relevant qualifications for their role.

Leaders and managers do not have sufficient oversight of the home and do not monitor the home effectively. The monitoring tool of the home is not used to its full advantage. This means that the manager has not identified maintenance in the home and shortfalls in practice.

Ofsted is not always notified about serious incidents that occur at the home. This prevents Ofsted from monitoring safeguarding concerns, and the actions taken by the staff and all safeguarding agencies to address these risks.

Staff say that they are supported by the manager and that they can speak to her, to seek support, at any time. This provides staff with confidence, and allows them to feel part of the team. Supervision sessions are up to date and reflective. They provide staff with up-to-date information on the children. This means that staff are aware of the children's ever changing needs.

All staff are up to date with their physical restraint, safeguarding, first-aid, self-harm, and medication training. This means that the staff continue to develop skills and knowledge in their roles, so that they can meet the needs of the children.

Leaders and managers advocate on behalf of the children and will professionally challenge others to get what the children need. This approach helps to ensure that children receive the extra support that they may need.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve? Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p>	6 April 2024
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>	6 April 2024
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p>	6 April 2024

<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	<p>6 April 2024</p>

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: SC424759

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Park Square, Leeds LS1 2NE

Responsible individual: Mark Raw

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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