

SC461450

Registered provider: Harmony Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is privately owned. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and may have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living at this home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2021.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2024	Full	Good
17/01/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Good
19/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home as part of a planned move and one child has moved into the home. The manager completed a comprehensive assessment of the child's needs. However, written records do not include an assessment of the compatibility with the needs of the children already living in the home. This has not had an impact on the children but is identified as an area for improvement.

Children are happy and safe living in the home and experience stability. One child said, 'This is the best place I have lived.' Children share positive relationships with staff who provide individual routines and structures in line with children's individual needs.

The home is well maintained; however, some areas require refurbishment and repainting. The manager confirmed there are plans in place to replace the kitchen, which does require modernisation. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their taste and provide a nurturing environment for children.

All children are enrolled in an education provision. However, not all children currently have full attendance in education. Managers and staff work closely with education professionals to improve children's attendance and punctuality. They also ensure that barriers to learning are addressed to prevent the impact on children's educational progress.

Children's health and emotional needs are met. Staff and managers work closely with mental health professionals to support children's needs. They gain support and advice from professionals to ensure that they provide the most appropriate, specialised care to children. The manager has purchased a number of books recommended by professionals to improve the staff's knowledge on childhood trauma and children's development.

Staff spend time gaining children's wishes and views. Children are regularly consulted about the care and support they receive. Children are open with staff and are able to raise any concerns. They know that staff will listen and take effective action.

Children engage in a range of activities and holidays. One child said how much she enjoyed going to Alton Towers.

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

Each child has detailed risk management plans in place. These outline individual risks and the measures in place to reduce and manage them. However, one child's written plans did not provide clear strategies for staff to follow if they were under the influence of substances and when staff should seek medical assistance. The manager

took action to rectify this issue immediately. Staff understand each of the children's risks and understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe.

There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. There are written plans in place for each child. Therefore, staff have clear protocols to follow if there is an incident.

Staff complete key-work sessions with children on a range of topics, including how to stay safe online and promoting their independence.

Allegations have been managed effectively by the manager. Information has been shared appropriately with relevant professionals.

Staff provide each child with clear structure and boundaries. The staff know the children well and understand how best to support their behaviour. Staff are trained in therapeutic parenting. This helps staff to understand the reason for children's behaviour and how best to de-escalate incidents. The use of consequences is low; however, not all incidents of consequences have been recorded. This prevents the manager from having clear oversight of each incident to consider whether the measure was appropriate and effective.

There have been some incidents where it has been necessary to hold a child in order to keep the child and staff safe. The records are detailed and the child is spoken to following the measure. However, staff are not consistently spoken to following incidents. This does not allow the staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice and raise any concerns.

There have been some incidents of self-injurious behaviour. All staff know how to support each child, and they have received additional training.

Children have access to online games and consoles. Parental restrictions are in place and children are supervised in line with their needs. Routines are in place around internet use to ensure that children have appropriate access.

The provider follows safer recruitment processes to ensure that only suitable people work in the home. One discrepancy was identified when the dates of previous employment detailed in a staff members application form did not correspond to the dates of employment provided by the referee. The manager took action to rectify this shortfall.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is qualified and experienced and is a visible presence in the home. The staff appreciate the support, advice and guidance provided by the manager. She is committed to improving the quality of care for children.

The home has a consistent staff team in place. Staff work well together, and morale is high. One member of staff said, 'The staff team are absolutely fantastic.' Agency staff have been used to cover staff absence, but the manager has ensured that only regular and familiar staff work in the home who understand the children's needs.

Staff receive regular supervision time that provides an opportunity to discuss children's needs and staff well-being. Supervision is also completed with agency staff. The manager has addressed any issues raised in relation to staff practice effectively.

All staff have completed relevant training, including additional training to support their understanding of how to support each child's individual needs. Staff are either qualified or enrolled on an appropriate qualification following completion of their probationary period. The manager continually shares research and findings from her own training to develop the staff's skills and knowledge. For example, she recently attended training in relation to the impact of domestic abuse on children's development and will share the key findings with the staff.

The manager has several monitoring and review systems to ensure that she has effective oversight of the home. The manager uses different tools to identify patterns and trends in children's behaviour and to help identify areas of progress or changes to risks. However, the monitoring and review systems in place have failed to identify some of the shortfalls found during the inspection.

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

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p>	<p>4 April 2025</p>

<p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>Leaders and managers must ensure that staff involved in an incident of holding a child are provided with an opportunity for a debrief to ensure that they can raise any concerns and reflect on their practice.</p> <p>Additionally, leaders and managers should ensure that consequences used to manage the behaviour of a child are recorded and evaluated to consider whether the measure was appropriate and effective.</p>	
<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> <p>Leaders and managers should have effective monitoring and review systems in place to ensure that shortfalls in the quality of care of children are identified and addressed.</p>	4 April 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should clearly record the compatibility of a child’s assessed needs with the existing group of children living in the home. Furthermore, the assessment should consider the experience and skills of the staff team and the location of the home. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 56, paragraph 11.4)

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: SC461450

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Children's Services

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

Responsible individual: Mark Raw

Registered manager: Yolanda McInnes

Inspector

Suzanne Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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