

2814838

Registered provider: Harmony Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It offers care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The home's statement of purpose states that staff adopt specific models of care.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2024 and is suitably qualified for the role. At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home, and all three children were spoken with.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 May 2025

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that staff are supportive, trustworthy and reliable. Most children feel comfortable sharing their concerns, knowing staff will listen and help. Furthermore, staff understand the importance of supporting children through turbulent times. Therefore, children experience persistent and good-quality care that helps them to feel safe, while fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Two of the children moved from an established home run by the same organisation. To alleviate any anxiety in the children, this was approached as a typical family would when moving home. Staff who had an existing relationship with the children also moved into this new home. This gave these children valuable life experience of adapting to change in a structured manner, as well as the excitement of moving into a new home. For another child, the manager meticulously planned their move into the home, creating a smooth transition that went well.

Staff build and develop constructive and professional relationships with the children's families. Inclusive practices strengthen care planning in most areas of the children's care. When asked how a child is kept safe in the community, one child's family member said, 'We all work together to make sure of that!'

Staff speak positively about children and celebrate their achievements. Special moments are captured in photos, which are then added to each child's memory book. In doing so, children can look back with fondness on their care. However, jargonistic terms are used in children's written records, and these are not written in a style that reflects the care and love that staff give the children.

Children mostly have a natural experience of care. This is due to the approach of staff and their awareness of the children's circumstances. However, this is undermined by leaders and managers employing an outdated approach concerning children who wish to make plans to sleep over at their friend's home. The standardised process marginalises children from the rest of society and disempowers staff in their role with the children.

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

Staff use their relationships and life experiences to act as role models to the children. As a result, children have learned to trust the guidance that staff give them. This means that, in moments of challenge, children recover from periods of distress with their relationships with staff remaining intact.

Risks to children are clearly identified, understood and managed in collaboration with professionals and family members. Furthermore, staff consistently attend meetings

concerning the children's welfare and make a valued contribution in these forums. In doing so, professionals and children's parents gain a valuable insight into how staff are managing any concerns associated with the children's lives.

Recruitment processes are thorough, with leaders and managers working closely with recruitment agencies to ensure that procedures align with the organisation's specific needs. This has resulted in comprehensive checks and collaborative recruitment practices. Therefore, leaders and managers gain confidence that staff are well matched to the organisation's values. Moreover, some temporary staff have chosen to take permanent roles, drawn by the home's positive culture and environment.

When the whereabouts of a child are unknown, in most instances, staff are effective in working collaboratively with the police and the child's family to ensure that the child is safely returned home. However, there is a lack of challenge from the manager around how return home interviews are conducted. This has depleted the potential support for the child, and the staff, to avoid future missing-from-home episodes.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers embrace learning opportunities and have fostered a culture of reflective practice. Indeed, staff say that their manager promotes reflection, debate and child-focused discussions. As a result, staff say that their supervision sessions are purposeful and influence a productive work environment.

The manager is respected by their team. Staff say that the manager influences good practice through actively leading the team. Furthermore, the manager is an advocate of modelling good practice. As a result, staff have a strong sense of accountability and thrive off responsibility, resulting in the home running efficiently in the manager's absence.

Senior leaders in the organisation are visible and approachable. Indeed, leaders have established meaningful relationships with the children. Staff say that this has created a family-orientated environment as leaders are tuned in to the needs of the children and the staff.

Training and development opportunities for staff are accessed in person and online. In respect of the diploma award, staff apply their learning into practice. However, staff say that completing online courses is not a positive learning experience. This is due to staff tending to complete several online courses in one day, which limits their ability to process, retain and reflect on their learning.

The organisation has failed to recognise the relevance of statutory guidance. As a result, leaders and managers have not been as effective in planning, responding to and influencing certain aspects of the children's care.

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

Statutory requirement

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 care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(d))</p>	1 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's written records are written in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, avoid using jargon and write in a manner that is easier for children to understand. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should challenge children's local authorities when statutory guidance is not adhered to, when a child returns to the home after being reported to the police as a missing person. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the important role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. In particular, ensure that any learning that is done remotely supports a positive learning experience. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: 2814838

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: Deborah Jagger

Inspector

Steve Guirey, Social Care Inspector

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