

# SC461450

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 privately operated and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living at this home. All children were spoken with. The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2021.

### Inspection dates: 3 and 4 December 2025

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 25 February 2025

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2025	Full	Good
12/03/2024	Full	Good
17/01/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children have lived in the home for several years. Therefore, children have a solid sense of stability and belonging. Crucially, children say that they feel confident that staff understand them and will help them. This was reflected in the comments of one child, who said, 'I didn't know what to expect when I came here. I didn't think that staff would care about me that much, but I've learned that they do. I've been here long enough now to know that.'

Younger children enjoy spending time with staff, in and out of the home. Indeed, staff understand the need to embrace fun and laughter. Moreover, staff use daily routines to teach children new skills, such as how to prepare meals using fresh ingredients. Therefore, children feel included, valued and, significantly, that staff care and love them.

Staff are skilled at communicating the children's care needs to one another in daily handovers. As a result, children experience consistent care. Furthermore, staff work hard to cover any gaps in the staff rota. When agency staff are required, the manager makes their best efforts to seek agency staff who are familiar to the children. This gives children a sense of comfort and reassurance that they have familiar staff who they can rely on.

Staff are interested in and care about the children's ethnicity. Indeed, there is good exploration around children and their families' backgrounds. In doing so, children are supported to celebrate their unique characteristics and to learn about their families' heritage. This has contributed to children learning about themselves and others, creating a tolerant and curious home environment.

Although the home reflects a typical family environment, with framed photos of the children and other homely artefacts, several rooms need an injection of love and care. Some furnishings need repair or replacement. Importantly, children have had help to personalise their bedrooms.

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

Fundamentally, children feel able, regardless of the time of day or night, to seek staff support when they are feeling low and are challenged by their mental health. This has been crucial when children have struggled to cope. In these instances, staff are quick to support children to receive more help, such as seeking input and support from health professionals as and when required.

Staff lead important conversations that need to be held with children. These conversations may be about typical teenage issues or personal to the children's care. In doing so, children are helped to better understand important issues, particularly associated with their growth and development.

Staff have a sound sense of their duty of care to the children. Indeed, there is a solid safeguarding culture in the home. Across the team, there is a good understanding of which professionals to reach out to if there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Staff reach out if they realise more help is needed with any aspect of the children's care. Reassuringly, given the substantive relationships between children and staff, most professional interventions are planned as children feel safe to use staff as their primary support.

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

Although the day-to-day care of the children is good, there is a significant lack of meaningful, creative and progressive care planning. For one young person, this has significantly hindered their access to education, their routines and their transition plans into adulthood. In this instance, the child's placement plan has been repeated for several months, resulting in their care becoming stagnant.

Staff have access to various online training courses. However, staff say that online training is often overwhelming and that it is challenging to retain information. Furthermore, there is a collective sense that supervision session training should inspire more reflective practice. Consequently, due to the quality of training, staff say that leaders and managers are not well equipped to support them with their mental well-being at work.

The manager does not make effective use of the staff annual appraisal process. This is due to outcomes being ambiguous. Consequently, staff are unclear what their personal and professional development looks like. This risks staff stagnating or feeling undervalued and unsupported to realise their personal career aspirations.

The children's written records reflect the child's day. However, the manager is aware that the language used in the children's written records needs to improve. Leaders' and manager's oversight of this is hindering progress in this area of the children's care. One report used in a child's statutory review meeting contained information that was humiliating for the child.

The home's statement of purpose gives vague information about a therapeutic partnership that they have with an independent provider. Therefore, it is unclear what this partnership looks like, what support they are able to offer a child and what the timescales are regarding accessing any agreed service.

The staff team is highly committed and is child focused in carrying out its role. Furthermore, staff are keen to maximise their potential to better support the children.

## 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 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 arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.</p> <p>(Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(iii))</p>	15 January 2026

### Recommendations

- The registered person should be aware that the information set out in the statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority. In particular, the information about children's access to therapeutic support should be factually accurate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)
- The registered person should ensure that the environment where children live looks and feels homely. In particular, maintaining the home as and when required. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.9)
- 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, ensuring that any online training supports staff's learning style and needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should use the staff appraisal process to assist staff in their professional development. In particular, identifying clear objectives for staff to work towards, as well as the support they need to carry out their role effectively. ('Guide to

the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

- The registered person should ensure that the children's written records are written carefully and with the child in mind in respect of the language used. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## **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

Steve Guirey, Social Care Inspector

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