

2605554

Registered provider: Child First Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run home. It is registered to provide care for up to five children aged eight to 18 years who may have experienced early childhood trauma. Five children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since August 2022 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

In this report, the staff are referred to as 'adults', as this is the term which is used in the home.

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers outstanding

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 29 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive thoughtful and attentive care from adults who are attuned to and familiar with their needs. Adults are skilled in developing meaningful and trusting relationships with children, which enables children to make exceptional progress.

The home is furnished and decorated with children in mind. Children's photos and achievements such as trophies and rewards are displayed in the home. A games room and spacious dining area provide the children and adults with the space to socialise and spend quality time together, while the resident chickens provide an alternative source of companionship.

Children moving into the home are greeted sensitively. Adults ensure that children know what to expect before they move in. Adults prepare personalised letters for children, with photos of the home and the adults who will care for them. Children say that this helps them feel valued. One child recalled the efforts made by the manager to answer all the questions that they had.

Children have some fantastic experiences and enjoy a range of social engagements that help them develop confidence, stay fit and build on their social skills. Children speak about the fun that they have roller skating, playing table tennis and taking part in gaming tournaments. Children are encouraged to pursue their interests and travel abroad. One child recently took part in a sports tournament overseas.

Excellent support is provided to children who move out of the home as they progress into adulthood and live more independently. Adults offer regular advice and guidance, and children continue to visit the home for evening meals and to use the laundry facilities. This ensures that adults maintain a sense of closeness with children who have moved on.

Adults are responsive to children's health needs and make every effort to prioritise children's emotional well-being, through exceptional nurturing and trauma-informed practice.

Children have access to meaningful learning opportunities that meet their needs. The manager is a keen and tactful advocate for children who have spent some time out of formal educational settings. This approach has achieved positive outcomes for some children and enabled them to return to school or college. Where this has not yet been achieved, children have a bespoke educational package that ensures consistent routines and learning.

Support for independence is well embedded in daily routines and tailored to the needs of each child. For older children, personalised independence plans are

thorough yet manageable. Adults guide the children so that they can develop the skills that they need and build their confidence.

Children have access to advocacy services and offer meaningful contributions to decisions made at their home. Adults ensure that they consult with children regularly. Children can view the records that adults complete. One child said that they like to do this, adding, 'It shows that adults do listen and remember what I have said.' Records are written with care and are child-focused.

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

Children's safety is integral to all elements of life at this home. When there are difficult times, adults respond with care and use their knowledge of the children to guide their practice. Adults are committed to co-producing plans with children that keep them safe and they ensure that children understand them. Children have positive and secure relationships with adults. This makes them feel safe to express themselves and to share any worries that they have.

Adults are skilled at supporting children who may be at risk of exploitation or knife crime. They work collaboratively with the police and other professionals. Adults have clear plans to reduce risks for children and to inform the actions that they should take if they have concerns for a child's safety. One adult is responsible for the recent development of a safeguarding network with other services in the local area, to further develop safeguarding responses. Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in the number of times that children have been missing or absent from the home.

Adults use a relationship-based approach to manage risk. They have regular conversations and specific catch-ups with children to ensure that work to keep children safe is mutually understood. Independence plans are informed by the vulnerabilities that children have and act as a further support mechanism to help explore and reduce the identified risks. For some children, this might mean exploring road safety, while for others it means discussing the importance of maintaining their finances safely.

Adults' training needs are identified and addressed efficiently by the manager, with timescales set for completion. Additional development opportunities are sourced in line with the needs of the children. This contributes further to the high standard of care and safeguarding in the home.

There are very few occasions when children need to be physically held to maintain their safety. When this does occur, adults speak to children to make sure that they understand the reasons why adults had to respond in this way. Adults focus on repairing relationships and supporting children to manage their emotions. This has reduced the number of times that adults have had to physically intervene.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager applies a sensitive yet robust approach to leadership. He is diligent in his oversight and is naturally reflective. These qualities underpin the culture that he has nurtured within the home. He is committed to upskilling the adults and ensuring that they flourish in their roles, so that they can maintain an increasingly high standard of care for children.

Parents and external professionals speak positively of the home and the manager. These relationships are nurtured by leaders and contribute to children's sense of stability. One professional said that they are impressed with the culture that has been developed at this home. Another said their child has made great progress, in an inclusive environment.

The manager is effective at motivating adults and helping them to feel valued. Adult catch-up meetings are well attended and provide an opportunity for adults to talk about any group dynamics in the household. The manager supports adults to consider children's experiences and explore their own feelings. These discussions ensure that relationships can be managed safely and boundaries can be implemented by a consistent and confident adult team.

Adults have regular supervision and annual appraisals that are reflective and child-focused. Adults are positive about the guidance that they receive. This includes adults who are new to the home, who all receive a thorough and structured induction. Adults work together cohesively, and leaders promote an inclusive culture.

The manager and responsible individual actively challenge others when practice needs to improve to ensure better outcomes for children. This includes escalating concerns with placing local authorities to ensure that children have education placements or requesting missing information about children.

There were no recommendations or requirements made following this inspection.

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: 2605554

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Child First Limited

Registered provider address: 62 The Street, Rustington, West Sussex BN16 3RN

Responsible individual: Matthew Langley

Registered manager: Daniel Wilson

Inspector

Tash Williams, Social Care Inspector

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