

2605554

Registered provider: CHILD FIRST LTD

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 January 2025.

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

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 30 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2024	Full	Outstanding
29/03/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive an exceptional quality of care from the adults at this home. Adults are perceptive about the children that they care for. They use skills of mentalisation and reflective practice to understand children's behaviours. This means that adults can respond in ways that feel 'right' and make sense to children. One professional said that the nurturing care they have seen at this home has 'given them hope' for children's future outcomes.

Children are thriving because of the strong sense of security and psychological safety that they feel at this home. Children's progress is remarkable and is testament to the devotion of the adults. One child's trust and relationships in the adults have significantly developed and as a result they are now using verbal communication more frequently. Another child has developed insight into their own behaviours and can speak about their feelings more clearly.

Children are given the opportunity to have new experiences and to create meaningful memories. When children are not confident about socialising, adults go above and beyond to help them to settle in and build social networks within and outside of the home. Adults attended a child's dance show recently. Being able to participate was a significant achievement for that child.

Children benefit from living in an inviting and well-maintained home. Children have spacious and comfortable bedrooms that are decorated to their own taste. Children contribute meaningfully to the decisions made about their home, which gives them a sense of ownership and upholds the value of inclusivity at this home.

Children's views are integral to all decisions, and they have plenty of opportunities to share their thoughts. Although no complaints have been made by children in this period, their feedback is taken seriously and responded to. Children make good use of advocacy services and are supported by adults to challenge external professionals if they are not content with decisions made that affect them.

Adults are proactive at ensuring that children receive a good quality of education. Plans around children's education are discussed and reviewed regularly with input from relevant authorities to make sure that things are progressing and changing to meet children's needs. For those who are not attending full time education, adults encourage children to maintain a consistent routine. However, one child is not currently benefitting from the fullest level of structure in their timetable that they need to ensure their best chance of success.

Newcomers to the home are welcomed warmly and the compatibility of children living in the home is carefully considered and planned for to reduce the likelihood of any instability. When children move on from the home, adults help children to navigate the

changes and maintain ongoing supportive relationships when this is the wish of the child. Endings are used as a time to reflect, learn, and provide feedback to other agencies to promote ongoing positive outcomes for children.

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

Children say that they feel happy and safe living at this home. Children's safety is treated with paramount importance and there is a transparent safeguarding culture in the home. Adults take care to ensure that children understand any decisions made about protecting them from harm. They teach children relevant skills to improve their safety and build trusting relationships, thereby increasing the likelihood that children will share any concerns they have about their own safety.

Adults use their skills to de-escalate difficult situations and connect with children. Adults use their strong relationships and good knowledge of children to implement this skilfully. A child described that an adult 'always helps me calm down and talks to me and understands my behaviours'. As a result, the use of physical restraint is infrequent. When this does occur, the registered manager ensures that the use of any measure is safe and proportionate.

When there are difficult times for children, the response is excellent. Adults and leaders work well with other professionals to review plans that are designed to keep children safe. Following behavioural incidents, managers have detailed conversations with adults and children to understand the underlying causes and identify ways of reducing the risk of a recurrence.

Managers respond to safeguarding incidents effectively. They ensure that learning is implemented in ways that promote children's wellbeing and reduce the risk of future harm. Adults have detailed knowledge of children's vulnerabilities and are keen to continuously develop their skills so they can protect and help children meaningfully. On one occasion, adults proactively sought the advice of specialists so that they are better able to safeguard children who use limited or alternative communication methods.

Sanctions are not used within the home. The focus of any consequence is to enhance safety, improve understanding and repair relationships. Adults model empathy and provide opportunities for children to demonstrate positive behaviours.

Adults communicate extensively with professional networks and ensure that information about incidents is shared promptly so actions can be taken swiftly. Adults and managers are transparent about their practice, which is an additional safeguard.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The newly appointed registered manager has ambitions for the development of the home and for the individual progress of each child. The changes to leadership have been managed in a child-centred way and the children have warm, loving relationships with

the registered manager and with the team of adults. Leaders are committed to maintaining a nurturing environment for children and take a compassionate approach to achieving this.

Children benefit from living in a home where there is good monitoring and oversight. The registered manager provides useful oversight and evaluation to inform and review records created by adults, which contributes to the positive learning culture at this home.

There are strong working relationships between the registered manager and relevant professionals. Through these relationships, managers ensure that children's plans are well co-ordinated, and that decision making is timely and child-focussed.

Adults say that they feel well supported by leaders and describe the registered manager as 'refreshing and calming'. Many adults describe it as genuinely feeling like a family home and this continues to be well embedded into the overall ethos of this home. Efforts are made to create an inclusive environment both for children and adults.

Children are supported by an experienced and stable team of adults. The registered manager enables adults to feel empowered to use their individual expertise. Through effective supervision and appraisal, adults are supported to increase their competence and confidence in their practice.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all children, who are not attending a full-time education provision, are engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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 LTD

Registered provider address: 62 The Street, Rustington, Littlehampton BN16 3NR

Responsible individual: Matthew Langley

Registered manager: Henry Crosby

Inspector

Tash Williams, Social Care Inspector

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