

# 1270744

Registered provider: Headstart Residential Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to five children, including children who have learning disabilities. Some of the children attend the organisation's school on the same site. The inspector only inspected the social care provision.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2021.

Due to COVID-19 at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 3 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 1 to 2 December 2021

**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      requires improvement to be good

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

**Date of last inspection:** 16 January 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
16/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/08/2019	Full	Good
03/01/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children experience well-planned care from staff who are attentive and familiar with every child's needs. Interactions between children and staff are warm and nurturing. This makes children feel secure and cared for, which enables them to make good progress.

Staff understand the importance of predictable structures and routines for children. Staff support children to engage in education and children make good progress from their starting points. Carefully planned activities give children the opportunity to have a wide range of social and recreational experiences. This provides opportunities for children to live full and interesting lives.

Staff are committed to helping children live as independently as possible. Teaching practical skills to children is embedded into practice. One young person told the inspector that the best thing about the home was that 'carers build up children's confidence'. He said he was glad he had learned new skills ready for when he leaves because, 'living more independently might be a bit of a shock otherwise'. Staff speak with pride when they describe the progress that children have made. The careful support children receive gives them the confidence to achieve the goals that are important to them.

Managers are committed to ensuring children experience placement stability. The members of the staff team are resilient when faced with challenges. In one example, a child's behaviour has deteriorated over recent months, but the staff team have stuck with him through this crisis. Despite the best efforts of managers and staff, measures to stabilise the child have been unsuccessful. Managers have implemented a bespoke timetable which has helped the child to be more settled while the placing authority seeks a new home for him. This flexible approach has increased the chances of the child having a positive experience of ending his time at the school and will give him time to adjust to moving to a new placement.

Children's views are valued. Staff are familiar with each child's methods of communication. Children's care and support plans are written by staff members who know the children well. As a result, the plans describe children's preferences about how to care for them. Wherever possible, children also influence decisions about the day-to-day running of the home.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. There is a strong ethos of supporting children to celebrate being who they want to be. In one example, a young person is being sensitively supported to understand more about their sexual identity. An inclusive culture which promotes equality and diversity enables children to explore their developing sense of identity and to be happy as themselves.

Working in partnership with people who are important to children is given high priority. For one child in particular, managers have supported their parent to understand how to help the child stay engaged in meaningful activities. This has enabled the child and their parent to spend more quality time together. An inclusive approach supports children to maintain positive relationships with their families.

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

Safeguarding children is a priority. High levels of staffing, and good quality training ensure that staff are attuned and responsive to the risks that are present for children individually and as a group.

Staff are adept at noticing changes in children's presentation and behaviour. They recognise that those changes may indicate that children are struggling and need additional support. Consequently, the use of physical intervention is kept to a minimum. Positive behaviour is noticed and rewarded. This demonstrates the managers' commitment to ensuring that children become increasingly safe while having a positive experience of care.

Children's health needs are supported by staff through careful planning and strong communication with external health professionals. Medication administration is safely managed by residential staff.

Incidents where children are at risk from harm are rare. The incidents which have occurred in recent months were dealt with quickly by managers. However, there was a delay in the incidents being reported to external safeguarding professionals. This represents missed opportunities for timely independent scrutiny of the plans which were put in place to safeguard the children.

Safe recruitment practices are understood and implemented by the manager and staff responsible for this area of practice. All necessary checks are in place to ensure that children are protected from unsuitable people working in the home. However, the safety of the recruitment process is undermined by some incomplete records.

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

A new registered manager has been appointed since the last full inspection. He is a trusted figure for the children and for the staff. He carries out direct work with children to provide support, particularly during difficult times. This has a negative effect on the quality of management monitoring and oversight of the home.

Managers have responded robustly to safeguarding incidents. However, they have not made sure that children's records contain details of the outcome. As a result, children do not have a full and accurate record of their time in care.

Records of physical intervention do not demonstrate that managers carry out a thorough review of incidents with the children and staff involved. In practice,

physical intervention is used appropriately, but records do not demonstrate that incidents are subject to scrutiny by managers.

The opinions of children, their parents, and other people important to them have not been ascertained as part of internal monitoring arrangements. This means that the registered manager does not have a well-rounded view of the experiences of the children, and the impact the care is having on outcomes for them.

Staff speak positively about the day-to-day support they receive from managers. However, staff have not been receiving regular, formal supervision. As a result, records do not fully demonstrate how the registered manager is making sure that all staff know how to safely meet children's needs in line with their care plans and risk assessments. Managers have recognised shortfalls in the supervision arrangements, and they have put measures in place to address them. The measures indicate early positives which are not yet embedded, and so the impact is not fully known.

Leaders and managers have demonstrated a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Managers make good use of the independent person's reports to inform service developments. As a result, there is a firm basis for improvements in the quality of management monitoring and oversight to be made.

## 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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to ensuring that if there are concerns about a child’s welfare, external safeguarding professionals are contacted without delay.</p>	<p>10 January 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p>	<p>10 January 2022</p>

<p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that records consistently demonstrate safe recruitment practice.</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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h))</p>	<p>10 January 2022</p>
<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>10 January 2022</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>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.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>are kept up to date.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children's records include information about the outcome of safeguarding investigations.</p>	10 January 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p> <p>(Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	10 January 2022
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p>	10 January 2022



In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—

the quality of care provided for children;

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

## 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:** 1270744

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Headstart Residential Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Aequitas, 1 Swan Wood Park, Gun Hill, East Sussex, United Kingdom, Horam TN21 0LL

**Responsible individual:** Nicola Dann

**Registered manager:** Manoli Vachoumis

## Inspector

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

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