

1275500

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 two children, including children who have learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 13 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2022

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

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

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: 19 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/09/2019	Full	Good
15/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living at this home receive high-quality care from a skilled and dedicated staff team. Staff are committed to developing positive relationships with each child. This makes children feel valued and secure, which enables them to make exceptional progress.

Staff are enthusiastic and persistent in their efforts to help children to achieve the goals which are important to them. One child was able to describe his progress to the inspector. He said: 'I couldn't even do my shoes up when I arrived. I barely knew how to do anything. When you think about it, it's amazing how much I can do now. I am very lucky I came here.' This child has made exceptional progress from his starting point, and as a result, his life chances are greatly improved. Sensitive support enables children to become more confident about their ability to live more independently in the future.

When children move into the home, this is meticulously planned. The child who has recently arrived had previously lived in the organisation's other home. This means that the child was familiar with most of the staff and with the child already living at the home. Even so, the registered manager made sure that he carried out a rigorous assessment of the impact of the new child moving into the home on the child already living there. The new child's social worker reported that she feels a genuine sense of warmth from staff when they speak about the child, and about their aspirations for what the child can achieve.

Children are meaningfully supported to participate in decisions which affect them. The registered manager explained to the child already living in the home the changes that would need to be made to systems and routines when the new child moved in. The registered manager took proactive steps to ensure that the existing child was not adversely affected by those changes. Children are treated with dignity and respect, which teaches them about acceptance and building positive relationships.

Consistent and predictable support from staff has meant that the impact on children of the COVID-19 pandemic has been minimal. The organisation's school has remained open throughout the periods of restrictions. The staff team is committed to increasing children's chances of successfully achieving their education goals. On the rare occasions when lessons have been carried out remotely, staff have provided thoughtful and well-planned additional support for children. As a result, children are enjoying learning and being supported to achieve to their full potential.

Children are encouraged to explore and develop a sense of their own identity. One child has been supported to join a football club, which is helping him to make friendships outside the home. Staff have created an environment which expands

children's interests and tells them that diversity is celebrated. In one example, staff provided sensitive and well-informed support to help a young person feel safe to explore his sexual identity.

The staff team receives highly effective support from a clinical psychologist and a behaviour specialist. As a result, staff have a thorough understanding of how to help children make progress in relation to their emotional well-being. Working therapeutically with children is fully embedded into practice.

Proactive steps are taken to involve children's families in care planning. The parents of both children spoke highly about the way managers and staff work collaboratively with them. Continuity of care is promoted by working in partnership with people who are important to children.

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

Children's safety and well-being are priorities for staff. The stability of the staff team means that all staff members have an excellent awareness of each child's strengths and vulnerabilities. Effective and open communication within the team and with other professionals further underpins the safeguarding culture and promotes children's safety.

Children receive individualised support to help them become increasingly safe. In one example, when a child was sent an inappropriate image to his phone, his immediate response was to tell staff. The child's trusting relationships with the adults kept him and the sender of the message safe from harm. The child has engaged in key-work sessions and meetings with a range of professionals, including a police liaison officer, to support him to learn about the risks of exploitation. Discussions with the child have been carefully planned and sensitively delivered. They have addressed specific vulnerabilities which exist for this child, and he has become safer as a result of the support staff have provided.

Due to the positive relationships enjoyed between children and staff, the use of physical intervention is rare. When restraints do occur, the registered manager carries out a thorough review with the children and staff involved. Learning is shared with the staff team. This demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.

Staff remain resilient when managing difficult situations. One child has left the home in an unplanned way during this inspection period. It is evident that staff made every effort to avoid this and keep him safe, but managers recognised that they could not keep him safe in the home. The staff have stayed in contact with the child to make sure he knows that he is still held in mind. As a result, the child, who has had traumatic early life experiences, has been helped to understand the importance of meaningful, trusting relationships. Managers and staff have reflected on the child's time at the home and used this learning to inform their current practice. This responsive approach demonstrates the registered manager's understanding of the

impact of unplanned placement moves for children and a commitment to learn in order to reduce the chances of this happening for children in this home.

The home offers a welcoming environment which is maintained to a high standard. The registered manager made some adaptations to the environment after seeking feedback from the newest child's parent before the child moved in. This has made the environment as safe and secure as possible for the child and has been extremely reassuring for the child's parent.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has high standards and is passionate in his efforts to be a good role model for the children and for the staff. Staff are unanimous in their praise for the support they receive from managers. Feeling valued and respected inspires staff to give high-quality care to children.

Managers ensure that staff receive extensive training which equips them to meet the specific needs of the children they are looking after. Staff training has been further enhanced with the introduction of an additional programme of workshops which are based on providing trauma-informed care. Promoting learning contributes to an ethos of well-informed staff helping children to flourish.

The registered manager has monitoring systems in place which ensure that he has excellent oversight of the quality of care provided to children. However, a shortfall identified in the inspection relates to the registered manager's scrutiny of compatibility assessments and children's individual risk assessments. In practice, risk management is exemplary, but the risk assessment documents do not fully describe the substantial support and safety measures which are in place for the children. Although this does not affect the well-being or safety of children, it is a missed opportunity to formalise some excellent practice.

Not all supervisors have recently had formal supervision training. Despite this, staff receive meaningful supervision regularly, and the records of these sessions are of a very good quality. The records demonstrate that managers are assessing and auditing each staff member's performance. As a result, managers can be confident that staff fully understand how to meet children's needs in line with their care plans.

The registered manager is fully involved in the children's lives. He is very clear about the progress they are making and has high aspirations for what they can achieve. He works closely with other professionals and takes effective action if plans need to change. Children are thriving as a result.

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 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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager should ensure that compatibility risk assessments and children's individual risk assessments fully reflect practice which is promoting children's safety and well-being.</p>	<p>14 March 2022</p>

Recommendation

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 1275500

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Headstart Residential Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Nicola Dann

Registered manager: Thomas Lambert

Inspector

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

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