

SC482418

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and managed. It provides care for up to four children who may have physical and learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2022.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home. All the children were present during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

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: 22 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2022	Full	Good
06/12/2021	Full	Good
12/11/2019	Full	Good
17/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive high-quality, personalised care from a committed and knowledgeable staff team. As a result, this is a very happy, family-orientated home with the children's presence felt, seen and heard throughout. Children express that they love living here. They have enjoyable experiences and make strong progress from their starting points. The quality of children's lives significantly improves because of their experience of living in the home. This includes children developing a real love and interest in cooking and baking, which helps them to develop their fine motor skills.

The care provided in the home is highly individualised, with close attention given to the specific needs of the children. The care and support that the children receive provide them with the best possible opportunities for progression and development. For one child, this included improvements in their toileting, which significantly improves their quality of life.

Children share meaningful and trusting relationships with all staff and enjoy spending time with them. The staff focus on the children's happiness, abilities and independence. The strong relationships children have with staff allow them to feel accepted, build on their self-esteem and enjoy their time at the home.

Children take part in varied activities. This means that they experience opportunities that they would not previously have been able to take part in. Children are helped to build positive memories and expand their creative, social and physical interests. Individual talents and interests are nurtured and encouraged. This has helped the children to develop their skills and enjoy new experiences, such as going swimming, playing pool and going to trampoline parks. This is due to the creative planning and preparation by staff.

Staff help the children to spend time with the people who are important to them. Sometimes, this is for the first time in several years. Staff are creative in how they facilitate and support these arrangements. This promotes the children's identity and helps them to maintain important relationships.

Children have made substantial and sustained progress with their education. The staff make all efforts to maintain effective communication with staff at children's education settings. The staff promote learning opportunities for the children at home. Children learn appropriate cognitive skills that support their dexterity. They enjoy reading stories, and one child enjoys learning about the emergency services through role play and dressing up. These are skills and experiences that children will continue to use throughout their lives, and their life chances are improved.

Staff help the children to lead healthy lifestyles, eat a good diet and take part in regular exercise. Staff support children to attend any routine medical appointments. The registered manager ensures that the children have access to specialist emotional or mental health and well-being support. This means that children receive individualised healthcare that reflects their bespoke needs.

The home's environment is highly child friendly. Great care has been taken to meet the specific sensory needs of the children. Children's artwork is on display throughout the home, which creates a colourful environment. There is an abundance of photos on the walls that reflect the many memories made. As a result, children identify their home as a safe place to play, have enjoyable experiences, be imaginative and explore.

Staff go above and beyond to promote positive relationships between children and the local community. Children have formed strong links with the local barber, cafe and local police station. Recently, the children delivered hampers and held a community car wash event. Children develop a sense of belonging and become more confident and independent in accessing their community safely.

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

The staff team has an excellent insight into the different risks and vulnerabilities that the children face. These are highlighted in the highly individualised and extremely detailed risk management plans. The staff meticulously plan the day-to-day arrangements in the home. Sufficient staffing arrangements means that the children are supervised and safely observed, without being deprived of their liberty.

The registered manager and her staff are creative and innovative in the work that they carry out with the children. The work is focused on what matters most to the children to continually improve their quality of life. Staff support children to develop their social and independence skills, which allows children to take appropriate risks, such as learning to cross the road. As a result, the children acquire the skills they need to safely explore the world around them.

Staff are passionate in their role of advocating for children. Staff are tenacious, and this was evident in ensuring a more dignified and less invasive emergency treatment response for one child with a rare form of epilepsy. This degree of persistence and advocacy ensures that children receive high-quality care. One health professional said:

'The staff are wonderful. I am extremely comfortable in the staff's competence. Because of them, they have kept [name of child] alive and improved their overall quality of life.'

Medication processes are tightly managed. The staff are trained and understand the medication policy and how to administer the different medications to the

children. Staff respond to children's differing health needs. The consistent care and positive relationships help children to stabilise and become less reliant on medication. The home is recognised by professionals for high-quality safety in its management and administration of medication.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. Leaders and managers have used current research into safeguarding in residential settings for disabled children to develop staff's knowledge and skills. When there are safeguarding concerns, staff and managers take immediate action. They are diligent and follow robust safeguarding policies and procedures to keep children safe.

On the rare occasion that physical intervention is used, staff have received the training to hold children to help to keep them safe. The manager scrutinises each incident. She adapts the strategies that staff should use and updates staff about any changes. This reduces repeat incidents, demonstrating that children become safer.

Recruitment practice is strong and effective and ensures that all staff are checked and vetted before looking after children. This helps to ensure that children are cared for by safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led and managed by an inspirational and dedicated manager who holds high aspirations for all the children. The manager is supported by two capable deputy managers and a stable staff team. The progress made in the home is a direct testament to the registered manager and her drive for continuous improvement.

The manager has employed a diverse staff team with a range of interests, skills and experiences. The staff are encouraged to share these with the children, and as a result children benefit from a variety of adult role models and their lives are enriched. The staff team shares the manager's enthusiasm and ambitions for changing the lives of children. This ethos enables the children to flourish at this home.

Staff are completely invested in the home's approach to care, and they support children to build resilience, enjoy learning and feel valued. The staff take immense pride in children's progress and achievements and treat children with positive unconditional regard. One staff member said, 'It is amazing to work here. Seeing the children happy and grow in confidence is extremely rewarding.'

The manager has created an open and inclusive culture that places children at the centre of practice. She ensures that children's participation is championed in this home. Children's views are prioritised and inform decisions about the way the home is run. This approach means that children's day-to-day experiences are greatly enhanced because of their involvement with this home.

The registered manager makes sure that staff receive regular and reflective supervision and that they can participate in the development of the home through effective team meetings. The home operates an open-door ethos where leaders and managers are also available for discussions outside of supervision sessions and team meetings. This promotes a cohesive culture, which means that leaders, managers and staff work together to focus on meeting children's needs.

The registered manager and staff team are highly valued by their fellow professionals. Feedback is consistent in recognising the positive care and help that the registered manager and staff provide for children and the exceptionally positive impact that this has on children's development. Other professionals, such as children's social workers, recognise that the registered manager is a strong advocate for the children and will escalate concerns to ensure that the children's rights are promoted.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the children's progress and of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The registered manager has robust monitoring systems in place.

Training and development opportunities for staff are good. The manager identifies additional training in response to children's complex or emerging needs. Staff use a variety of communication techniques and aids to ensure that the children's voice is heard. However, staff have not received training in supporting children who do not communicate verbally or who use alternative communication systems. This would further strengthen the total communication approach in which the home aims to deliver.

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.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the skills to understand how children might communicate non-verbally especially where the child has a disability. In particular, the registered person should ensure staff receive training to support their practice when using alternative communication systems with disabled children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.9)

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: SC482418

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Registered provider address: Rickleton 1B, Bowes Offices, Lambton Park,
Chester-le-Street DH3 4AN

Responsible individual: Simon Duffy

Registered manager: Donna Grimes

Inspector

Claire Webster, Social Care Inspector

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