

2729935

Registered provider: Silver Birch Care (Residential Services) Limited.

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to five children with emotional and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted on 29 June 2023. This was the home's first inspection.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 January 2024

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children have a lovely spacious home with good resources. Children's bedrooms are personalised with individually chosen themes and decorations. Children like their bedrooms and have everything they need. The home has frequent visits from a therapy dog, which the children enjoy.

Staff show kindness and patience towards children. This helps children feel comfortable in the home, and they are able to share their feelings with staff. One child said that they feel that the staff care about them. This has had a positive impact on the child's well-being and sense of security.

Each child has a dedicated key worker, and children speak positively about staff members. One child has disengaged, and their progress has decreased. Staff are alive to this issue and are working with the professional network to ensure that the child is getting the right support.

The home is aware that one child, who is a significant distance from their family, is struggling, which impacts on their emotional well-being. Staff implemented a safety plan and advocated for the child to spend time with their family over the Christmas period. This was a positive outcome for the child.

Information is shared promptly with the professional network. Staff regularly support children to contribute to their reviews, and they help children to participate in these meetings. Most children in the home are attending education. Staff celebrate children's progress with certificates when they achieve targets.

Transitions into the home have been managed well. Children make visits before moving in, which has helped them settle well into the home.

Staff ensure that the children attend regular and routine health appointments. The registered manager has a good understanding of the children's individual health needs. Managers work effectively with placing authorities to ensure that children have timely access to health services. The registered manager has worked with one placing authority to ensure that a specialist assessment for a child is undertaken in response to their presenting needs.

Staff undertake frequent key-work sessions with children. This is a strength in the home, and the variety and quality of these sessions are helpful to children. Staff listen to children and explore their likes and interests. Children participate and enjoy purposeful activities with each other that build their confidence and self-esteem. This helps children feel a sense of belonging together.

Staff do not always ensure that the children can move around freely in their home. There are areas of the home that the children cannot access. This restriction has not always been communicated or reviewed with the children.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the risks for each child and how to manage them. Plans have been updated when risks increase, and there is good oversight to ensure that staff respond in a consistent manner. Staff have built close relationships with children, which has resulted in children feeling safe enough to share their worries.

The registered manager has a good understanding of safeguarding concerns and responds appropriately to ensure that children and staff are safeguarded. The manager liaises with others such as social workers, the local authority designated officer and schools to promote an open and transparent approach to safeguarding. Children know how to make complaints and understand how to raise their concerns. When a complaint is made by a child, this is prioritised by the manager and resolved. This helps children feel that their concerns are taken seriously and explored in a timely manner.

There have been incidents of bullying in the home. The registered manager has implemented a protocol that most children understand and are familiar with. When a child raises concerns, they are appropriately and transparently addressed. This approach means the children's concerns are heard and responded to by staff in a timely way.

There are clear expectations about routines and acceptable behaviour. However, staff are not always confident in knowing when to use restraints to prevent escalation. The manager and the team have reflected to consider how this can be better managed in the future. This is a new home, and as the team has developed together, staff have become more confident in managing situations where restraints are required.

Children do go missing from home. However, there is a robust approach in managing missing-from-home episodes. On occasions when children do not return home by themselves, staff have gone to find them and remained with them to ensure that they are safe. This reflects the dedication of staff members in wanting to support and safeguard children in their care.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a registered manager who is working towards her level 5 diploma.

The registered manager is a strong advocate for the children in her care. Professional and staff feedback is that children are central to her decision-making.

The manager has embedded an effective process of quality assurance. This is achieved in several ways, including reviewing records, reviewing monthly progress reports, staff supervision, undertaking activities with the child and seeking feedback

from children's families and the professional network. Children contribute and influence their care within the home. The manager thinks creatively to engage with the children so that their views and wishes can be heard.

The manager has a good understanding of the children's needs and is swift in recognising when children's plans may require adapting to best meet their needs. This can involve the manager having to challenge professionals within the child's network. The manager was able to successfully advocate for one child in a way that has helped them to remain engaged in education and continue to make progress.

Team meetings are held regularly. They are well structured and provide opportunities for staff and the manager to discuss children, safeguarding issues and staff practice. This supports effective management oversight of the staff team and the progress that children are making.

The recording of some children's records is poor. The manager is aware that this is an area for further development and has arranged training for all staff. Information about the child is not always recorded clearly and with the detail that will be helpful to the child, not only now but also in later life.

The manager follows safer recruitment processes carefully and ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. A comprehensive staff induction programme and good learning opportunities ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to care for children effectively. The induction programme is monitored by the manager, and feedback is provided to staff on their performance. Staff say that they are well supported by the manager.

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, The 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children’s home’s premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child’s privacy or access to any area of the home’s premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	<p>22 March 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home’s staff in response to the event. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that all their staff have been adequately trained in the principles of restraint and any restraint techniques appropriate to the needs of the children that the home is set up to care for, as defined in the home's statement of purpose. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.57)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2729935

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Silver Birch Care (Residential Services) Limited

Registered provider address: SBCH House, 212 Ballards Lane, London N3 2LX

Responsible individual: Craig Wallace

Registered manager: Rebekah O'Malley

Inspector

Harby Bashir, Social Care Inspector

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