

# 2583468

Registered provider: Watermead Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have emotional and social difficulties.

The home is led by an experienced and registered manager. Since the previous inspection, two children have moved out of the home and two children have moved in.

### **Inspection dates: 19 and 20 February 2024**

**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:** 7 March 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
07/03/2023	Full	outstanding
25/01/2022	Full	outstanding

## Inspection judgements

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

The quality of individualised care provided to the children is exceptional. The manager and staff know children incredibly well. Managers and staff have intricately tailored children's plans to meet their specific needs. The home replicates a family environment where staff maintain meaningful relationships with children long after they leave the home. One professional said: 'The staff's commitment to the children and young people is insurmountable and this is reflected in the connections that they have with their children and young people.'

When children move on to independence, staff provide an extraordinary level of support to them. Staff provide practical and emotional support which replicates how parental figures would support their own children. Staff make referrals to the relevant agencies and work in partnership with adult services. This enables young people with very complex needs to have successful transitions into adult life.

Children do exceptionally well in education, considering their starting points. Staff have high expectations for children to learn and achieve. Staff are strong advocates for children and work extremely well with teachers and tutors. Children learn to believe in themselves and engage well. Staff supported one child to successfully transition from an alternative provision to a mainstream school. Another child receives one-to-one tuition and is achieving age-related expectations. Other children who have left the home have gone on to study at college and university. This is commendable.

Staff excel in meeting children's physical and emotional health needs. Staff help children who have suffered with long-standing and neglected health needs to access assessment and treatment. Staff tenaciously seek additional support from appropriate agencies, such as mental health services, counselling services and substance misuse services. As a result, children's health and overall well-being improve significantly.

Staff encourage children to have fun and achieve. Staff are creative in engaging children who are initially reluctant to try new experiences. For example, one child enjoys diving lessons, and another child likes to play pool. Last summer, a child and staff holidayed abroad together. These experiences help to build children's confidence and self-esteem.

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

Staff understand the risks that children are facing. Staff robustly assess and review any risk associated with each child. Staff make decisions regarding risk in collaboration with other professionals, such as social workers, the police and community psychiatric nurses. Risks are well balanced between keeping children safe and allowing them to take age-appropriate risks. One professional said: 'The staff group and the manager always go the extra mile to safeguard the children who are placed with them.'

The manager and the staff competently manage the risk of exploitation. They proactively share pertinent information with relevant professionals, such as safeguarding leads in local authority exploitation teams. Where risks of exploitation arise, staff implement appropriate safeguards. Staff have daily discussions with children to support them to stay safe. This proactive approach to safeguarding helps reduce the risks children are exposed to.

Staff respond proficiently to children who go missing. They make every effort to find children and they support them exceptionally well when they return. Staff liaise with relevant agencies, such as parents, social workers and the police. Staff are curious and work hard to understand why children go missing so that they can provide them with the relevant support and safety plans. For some children, this has helped to significantly reduce the number of times they go missing.

Staff use a trauma-informed model of care. This focuses on building trusting and meaningful relationships with children. Staff implement firm boundaries with warmth and empathy. This helps children to feel safe. Through daily discussions, staff help children to process their experiences, feelings and emotions. Children trust staff and feel heard, valued and cared for. Consequently, children who have had several moves prior to moving to this home settle quickly and make significant progress.

Staff help children to formulate their own safety plans and ways to self-soothe in times of distress. For example, staff have helped one child to deal effectively with feelings of wanting to harm themselves. As a result, risks in this area have reduced.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The manager is inspirational and knowledgeable and focuses on providing children with exceptional care. The manager is leading a home where child-focused practice is at the centre of everything. The manager is supported by a stable and committed staff team who admire and respect her leadership. Staff have access to a clinical psychologist who provides both professional and personal support. As a result, staff feel extremely well supported.

Staff are highly skilled and trained in their role. On a monthly basis, and as children's needs arise, the manager uses relevant research and practice to upskill the team.

Staff report feeling confident, knowledgeable and equipped to respond to behaviours that are difficult to manage, such as incidents of self-harm and physical aggression.

Managers and staff work incredibly well with external agencies, such as tutors, social workers and safeguarding professionals. They work in collaboration and are proactive in their communication. Feedback from external stakeholders is exemplary. One local authority team manager said: 'They are an exceptional home. The management and staff group work really well together and with other agencies to ensure children are safeguarded.'

The manager has excellent oversight and quality assurance processes in place. The manager is visible and has robust oversight of children's care. The manager seeks to continually learn and improve children's experiences. For example, she gains insights from incidents and placement endings to further improve the service. The manager shares her learning with local authorities to help raise standards of care in the wider system.

The manager safely and prudently recruits staff. She follows appropriate safe recruitment practices. Children participate in the process by generating their own questions for applicants. Managers use assessment tools to consider candidates' attitudes and beliefs about children who have experienced trauma. This provides further scrutiny and helps to identify areas of shortfall or concern.

## **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:** 2583468

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

**Registered provider:** Watermead Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** Suite 135, 1 Hanley Street, Nottingham NG1 5BL

**Responsible individual:** Anne-Marie O'Reilly

**Registered manager:** Sharon Smith

## **Inspector**

Emma Dacres, Social Care Inspector

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