

2688421

Registered provider: The Beeches UK Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to three children with complex needs. The children may have had traumatic experiences that have left them vulnerable.

The manager registered at the same time as the home, in October 2022.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

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 applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection. All are part of the same family and moved to the home together. They are the first children to move into the home since registration.

The children have settled well and enjoy living at the home. They are beginning to make progress, with steps towards independence. All the children quickly started school placements and have good levels of attendance. The manager works closely with school leaders to help the children build confidence and overcome their adverse experiences in previous school placements.

Children are supported to lead a healthy lifestyle. Staff help children to choose balanced diets and give boundaries around eating treats and snacks. Children take regular exercise and play with staff outdoors, which benefits children's well-being. However, plans to provide bicycles and exercise equipment have taken longer than expected.

Children keep active and busy; they enjoy spending time with staff and feel valued. Children are making good use of community resources, including training sessions with local football teams. Staff are supporting one child to overcome a fear of water by taking them swimming regularly. This is something that the child said they now love doing. Staff arrange a wide programme of enrichment opportunities. These include short breaks away and special trips out.

Children are making new friends at school and are looking forward to arranging play dates and strengthening connections with peers. The manager and staff understand the importance of children maintaining connections with their family. Children are supported by staff to travel long distances to see their relatives. The children's relatives said that they appreciate the kindness, helpfulness and respect shown to them by the manager and staff team. One relative said, 'It's been amazing for the children. They now have prospects and a future.'

The manager has considered the dynamics of three brothers moving to the home together. The manager has worked closely with local authority professionals to ensure that the children are treated as individuals, but recognises the importance of the children's close family bond. Staff use their therapeutic approach training and experience to help children adjust to recent major changes in their lives. This work includes helping them to understand boundaries and expectations of positive behaviours.

The home has been furnished and remodelled to provide a welcome and homely environment. Children have been given gentle and thoughtful support to have their own bedroom space for the first time. This has been a big step for them. Other professionals said that this has been positive progress. However, personalisation of

individual spaces has been slow in some areas. Repairs to some parts of the garden and keeping it free from litter have not been timely.

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

Children said that they feel safe. Staff have completed training in how to keep children safe from the risks of abuse or exploitation. Staff have a good understanding of the additional vulnerabilities of children who live in care. Staff know how to raise concerns to managers and external professionals.

Risk assessments assess each child in detail and reflect the additional complexities of a family group. These are regularly reviewed as children settle or make steps towards greater independence. There have been no serious incidents. There have been no missing-from-care events, although staff are well prepared for this and have anticipated their response.

The manager is preparing children for the safe use of internet-enabled devices as they grow older and seek greater autonomy and independence. Staff understand the risks to children associated with online use and have systems to monitor this when required. Children's freedom is not unnecessarily restricted and great consideration is given to finding the right balance between freedom and safety. However, the manager has not arranged for written consent from the appropriate professional or relative for the use of a door alarm or for CCTV use in the garden area.

Children's behaviours are becoming increasingly positive. Staff understand the importance of setting clear boundaries and expectations. The use of restrictive physical interventions is reducing. Staff know the detail of each child's triggers and responses to certain scenarios. Staff always attempt to calm incidents before using physical interventions. Only low-level techniques are used. Extensive debriefs and reflection are always completed and used to inform care plan and risk assessment reviews.

After incidents, staff use restorative approaches and support to help children to build positive relationships with each other. Good behaviour is praised and encouraged, with children able to earn rewards. The use of natural consequences is closely monitored for effectiveness and suitability. Staff know and understand the impact of previous adverse experiences on children. Staff use kindness and build trust to help children learn how to put things right.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has ensured that this newly registered home has been quickly able to provide good-quality care and support to children. Staffing has been very consistent, which has helped children to form positive and stable relationships. The staff are well motivated and enjoy working at the home.

Staff said that the support they have received from the management team has been crucial to the positive start for the home. Professionals and relatives shared very

positive views of the professional and caring nature of the manager and appreciate the good-quality and timely communication with them.

Staff are enthusiastic about and committed to the home. They are keen to learn new skills and understand established models of care approaches. They benefit from good-quality face-to-face training, which they say has been essential in gaining the skills and confidence that they need.

Staff have regular and detailed supervision sessions with managers. Reflective practice and discussion are a cornerstone of the manager's approach to ensuring that children receive safe, effective care. Staff benefit from well-organised and well-attended staff meetings. This has helped to form a positive supportive culture among staff.

The home has quickly become settled. The manager's experience in social care means that they already anticipate that the children's needs will change as they explore their childhood experiences and the recent changes to their lives. The manager is preparing for this by continuing to upskill staff and embed therapeutic approaches to care.

Children's views are greatly valued and they have several avenues to share them. The managers and staff listen to children and encourage them to speak up, looking for ways to do this that work for children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is well maintained. In particular, they should ensure that the garden area receives regular and timely maintenance and is free from litter. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that they gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance from the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. In particular, gain consent for the use of door monitoring alarms and CCTV used in communal garden areas. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child's day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. In particular, ensure that the provision of bicycles and exercise equipment and the personalisation of children's bedrooms happens without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

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: 2688421

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Beeches UK Limited

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

Responsible individual: Michelle Robinson

Registered manager: Deborah Briggs

Inspector

Jamie Cousins, Social Care Inspector

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