

# SC481844

Registered provider: Living Life (UK) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who may have social and emotional needs.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is suitably qualified and experienced.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 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:** 28 February 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/02/2023	Full	Good
21/07/2021	Full	Good
21/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/07/2018	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children are currently living in the home. They are both in their first few months of their placements after a period of crisis and instability. Staff are working hard to get to know the children, who have not lived in residential care before. They are building trusting relationships with children. One child says that he is happy and has nothing that he would like to change about the home. Both children speak positively about the outings and activities that they enjoy with staff.

Staff have been experiencing challenges in helping children to settle. There are signs that children are starting to respond. One parent said that their child was less anxious and teary. Another said that their child would be happy to stay living at the home if he could not return to family. Staff have worked with the home's psychologist to produce detailed psychological formulations of the children. The manager works well with other agencies. She initiated weekly professionals' meetings to share information for one child. These steps help staff to develop their understanding so they can better help children.

Children attend school full time. Staff communicate effectively with school staff. A deputy head reports progress with a child's behaviour at home and school. He said that staff have, 'done remarkably well at turning things around, giving stability, structure, routine. He [the child] feels safe in placement and this has translated to school; he is far more settled at school.' The manager has shared detailed information with a child's school to promote consistency and increase stability through a shared nurturing approach. This child enjoys celebrating his successes at school with staff. This builds their self-esteem and encourages a positive attitude to learning.

Children are in good physical health. Where necessary, staff ensure that children attend relevant medical appointments. Staff will pursue health professionals for necessary further investigations and consultations. The manager has been proactive in seeking professional support with healthy sleep routines. The child's sleep has improved, and he can cope better with the challenges that he faces in the day.

Parents and legal guardians feel that staff listen to and value their experiences of caring for their children. One parent said, 'They are genuine, and people really care; [they are] really compassionate and I've never felt judged by them. They advocate for us as a family. It has enabled our relationships to be nurtured. We are a team.' The manager advocates to ensure that family time arrangements best serve children's needs for stability. Staff make observations about children's responses to seeing family members. This helps to inform children's future care plans and to promote stability for children.

Staff listen to what is important to children and make changes accordingly. When a child was struggling with certain parts of their routine, staff developed a clear set of

rules with the child to help manage their anxieties. When children experience barriers to taking part in their leisure interests, staff adapt approaches to enable them to take part. Staff record children's memories and achievements. Staff encourage children's friendships when they see these developing. Staff routinely record positive memories and comments about children and share them with children. This promotes children's self-esteem.

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

Staff understand children's needs and risk. They use a comprehensive suite of risk assessments, which are clear and detailed. Staff respond to emerging risks. For example, when both young children left the home without permission, the manager put safety measures in place. Staff explored concerns for their safety with both children. Staff manage the interactions between children, so they do not engage in unsafe behaviours together.

Staff are building trusting relationships with children. One child has started to share difficult earlier experiences. Staff use the preferred therapeutic approach, which staff understand and explore which parts work for each child.

The number of incidents in the home are reducing in frequency and intensity. There have been a significant number of occasions when children have been physically restrained. These are mainly brief. The manager has supported staff to manage this particularly challenging period and she has sought support from external agencies. This provided further checks and balances about staff practice when holding children to keep them safe. Staff do not always record details of the strategies attempted. Debriefs do not consistently show reflection. This limits the opportunity to develop strategies for how to approach situations in other ways.

Children have made several allegations, which have been associated with their experiences of physical restraints. The manager has agreed protocols in place to ensure the safety of children and staff. The designated officer says that the manager communicates clearly with her and concerns are escalated when necessary. She routinely reviews a chronology of incidents produced by the manager. This also helps the manager to look for patterns and trends. Staff follow up with children in a balanced way.

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

The service is led by a motivated and caring manager. She is supported by senior leadership in advocating for children, such as around family time or funding for staffing. Staff respect the manager for her child-centred decisions. Staff, external professionals, and children's family members value the support they receive from the manager.

Although staff have experienced significant challenges in helping children to settle, they say that they enjoy working in the home. The manager shows staff that their

well-being is important. The psychologist provides opportunities for staff to restore their resilience.

The manager is proactive in seeking support from other professionals and family members. She builds a detailed knowledge of children and their needs by working closely with those who know children well or have professional expertise. She is a positive role model to staff as she is receptive to advice and learning to improve the care for children.

Some staff work across the provider's other homes. Staff say that there is good communication between the homes' managers to ensure that relevant information is shared through supervision. Staff say that they receive thorough handovers when coming back to the home after working in another home. One staff member was unclear which home they would be based at after a prolonged period at this home. Managers are aware of children's attachment needs and the benefits of minimising changes in staff for young children.

Leaders have a range of monitoring systems to understand the progress that children make and ensure that actions are followed up. The manager uses chronologies and monitoring systems to look at trends. The manager assigns staff to lead with certain tasks, such as auditing key work with children. Staff feel supported to develop professionally through such additional responsibilities.

Children are consulted in a variety of ways. Children take part in 'get togethers' with staff and have regular discussions with the manager. Home-based activities are planned. Children came together with a child who had left the home, staff, and their families for a 'happy café'. This promotes belonging and self-esteem in line with the principles outlined in the home's statement of purpose.

Staff are positive about supervision, which they regularly receive. The recording of supervision does not capture staff's reflection on practice or opportunities for amending practice to ensure that it meets children's needs.

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

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff receive supervision that 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:** SC481844

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

**Registered provider:** Living Life (UK) Limited

**Registered provider address:** 60 Overstone Road, Sywell, Northampton NN6 0AW

**Responsible individual:** Lorraine Andrews-Miller

**Registered manager:** Sophie Savage

## Inspector

Helen Gronhaug, Social Care Inspector

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