

1231458

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation and provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager post has been vacant since July 2023. The operational managers and deputy manager have day-to-day oversight of the home.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/12/2022	Full	Good
10/01/2022	Full	Good
05/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Leaders and staff promote the good health of all the children. Children are registered with health services and are supported by staff to access specialist appointments. Children benefit from discussions with staff on topics such as personal hygiene, safe sex, and healthy relationships. Effective communication between staff and other professionals has helped one child to engage with a mentor and navigate difficult health issues.

Children make good progress with their education. After a significant period away from school, consistent support from staff has helped one child to attend school again. Developing a better routine has helped to increase the child's attendance and, as a result, their attainment has improved. Staff are aware of children's aspirations, and have sourced a nail course for a child who is interested in the beauty industry. For another child, alternative education and tutoring are being explored to support their learning.

Staff pay great attention to helping children to have experiences that create positive memories. For example, when a child missed a trip to the theatre, staff contacted the theatre company and were able to negotiate tickets for a London show. Children also get involved with charity work, and connections have been made with a popular local clothing brand. The attention that staff pay to helping children to have good experiences helps children to have a sense of belonging.

Relationships between children and staff are warm and nurturing. Staff support the children to express their views and wishes. Consequently, children feel confident about speaking to staff about worries and any issues they may have. The children have positive relationships with each other. One child's social worker said, 'I'm pleased about the care they [the child] receive. The home has provided them with stability and security. They generally have a good relationship with staff, and they can work with them to keep safe.'

Children's bedrooms are decorated to their tastes. The lounge and kitchen are warm and homely. However, some areas of the home, such as the hallway, require redecoration.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of children's risks and the agreed strategies to support them. Team meetings provide a valuable opportunity for the staff, managers, and the clinician to discuss the children's needs and their care. This equips staff to respond well to children's needs and reduce risk.

When children are vulnerable to exploitation, staff respond well. The operations manager has consulted tirelessly with external professionals, including the local police force, exploitation team, education staff, social workers, and mentor services for children. Communication with other professionals is timely and concerns are escalated

appropriately. Staff support children in understanding exploitation, the risks, and how to keep themselves safe. A consistent approach by staff helps children to recognise that staff value them and want them to be safe.

Managers regularly review consequences to ensure that they are proportionate and effective. Children talk with staff about the reasons for consequences and can share their views. This helps children to reflect on their behaviour and understand expectations. The manager provides a good review to ensure that staff have been fair when issuing consequences.

When children go missing from the home, staff respond in keeping with children's plans. Staff do all they can to locate children by carrying out searches. Regular communication with professionals and children's family members keeps them informed. Children are provided with a warm welcome when they return to the home, and children's return-home interviews are timely. On two occasions, staff recording was not detailed and lacked clarity. Managers have started to address shortfalls in recording with staff through focused supervision.

Leaders did not notify Ofsted of significant missing incidents. This prevented Ofsted from having effective oversight of the operation of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There has been no registered manager in post since July 2023. Since this time, two managers have commenced in post, but have subsequently left for personal reasons. The home is overseen by the operational managers and the newly appointed deputy manager. The recruitment campaign for a manager continues.

Staff say that they are supported by managers. Leaders ensure that staff have regular and reflective professional supervision. Staff feel confident in being able to voice concerns. They enjoy their roles and feel positive about their work.

Leaders focus on increasing the knowledge and skills of staff. Staff have completed child-specific training on topics such as online and cyber security, safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, substance misuse, and understanding self-harm. Leaders have engaged the police to gain resources to further enhance the staff's understanding of child exploitation. Staff training is bespoke to the needs of the children. This means that staff are better equipped and prepared to meet children's needs.

The safe recruitment of staff has improved. Recruitment files show the steps taken to ensure that full checks have been completed prior to staff starting in their roles. As a result, leaders are more assured that staff are safe to work with children.

Although staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe, children's risk assessments are not very clear. Shortfalls in records could lead to children receiving inconsistent care.

Staff rotas do not reflect the full names of the staff working at the home, or an accurate record of the hours that staff work. This means that it is unclear who works in the home and when they have worked.

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, 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that risk assessments relating to children are clear.	21 May 2024
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if - there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1) (a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	21 May 2024
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.	21 May 2024

The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that rota's have the full name of staff, in addition to the actual hours worked recorded.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they notify Ofsted of all serious events. This includes in the event of children who are at risk of exploitation going missing from the home for extended periods of time.	21 May 2024

Recommendations

- 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. 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 quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1231458

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 20-22 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU

Responsible individual: Hilton Mutariswa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Chanel Bryant, Social Care Inspector

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