

1231458

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a private children's home offering care and accommodation for up to three young people who have complex needs.

There has been no registered manager in post since January 2018. An interim manager was appointed in January 2018 but left in May 2018. Another interim manager is in post temporarily. A new manager has been appointed and will take up a permanent position in July 2018.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 27 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/04/2017	Full	Good
25/10/2016	Full	Good

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child;	31/07/2018

(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(vi)(c)(i)(ii)) The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care; help each child to prepare for any review of the child's relevant plans and to make the child's views, wishes and feelings known for the purposes of that review; and ensure that each child— is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives; is given appropriate advocacy support. ensure that the views of each relevant person are taken into account, so far as reasonably practicable, before making a decision about the care or welfare of a child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)(b)(i)(iii)(e))	31/07/2018
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs.	31/07/2018

(Regulation 31(1))	
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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	31/07/2018
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.	31/07/2018
(Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by	31/07/2018

the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(3)(d))	31/07/2018
The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and has their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(4)(a)(b))	31/07/2018
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry.	31/07/2018

Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.	31/07/2018
(Regulation 39(3))	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.	31/07/2018
(Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))	

Recommendations

- Ensure that the registered person builds a strong safeguarding culture in the

home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.8) In particular, ensure that staff always fully complete the visitors' book.

- Ensure that the children's guide is age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure that they understand it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.20)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people have experienced an unsettled period over the past few months, as a result of managers and staff leaving the home. Young people have been cared for by many different staff, including agency staff. One social worker commented to the inspector that her young person was unsettled and questioned whether she wanted to remain at the home.

There are shortfalls in the home's environment and garden. The home's statement of purpose describes the home as 'a large semi-detached two-floored house with an attractive presence'. However, there are areas in the home that require redecoration, including the hallways and stairs, areas of damage that have not been repaired, and one room has an unpleasant odour. Young people commented on the home in their meetings. One young person said, 'the bathroom is dirty'. The garden, which was the subject of previous recommendations, remains a large undeveloped space. Consequently, young people do not live in an environment conducive to their needs.

Young people participate in meetings with staff and have frequent key-work sessions. These discussions enable young people to discuss various topics, including personal safety, hygiene, education and behaviour. However, the case records made by staff do not reflect how young people are encouraged to contribute to their care planning or illustrate how they are informed about plans that affect them. Staff have also not explored with young people their rights to having an advocate. As a result, young people do not have sufficient opportunity to express their views to people who are independent of the home or to have their views captured in key records.

Staff support young people with age-appropriate responsibilities. For example, young people are encouraged to do household chores and their own laundry. However, staff do not set timescales about what young people need to accomplish to help ensure that they have the required life skills ready for adulthood.

Young people all have a copy of the children's guide, which gives them essential information about the home, how it runs, and whom to contact if they need advice and support. The children's guide is very long and detailed and may not be accessible to all young people in the home.

All young people are in school full time and their attendance is good.

Despite the challenging period, staff strive to develop and maintain positive relationships with young people. Young people enjoy a range of activities at home and in the community. This includes going to youth club, football and sports as well as activities in the home and garden.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff have failed to ensure that young people's risk assessments and the home's care placement plan are kept up to date. For example, one placement plan refers to incidents in 2017. This shortfall means that young people's care plans are not regularly updated and reviewed to help promote their welfare.

Staff recruitment records do not always include details about a staff member's previous work history. For example, an applicant's history only records the years they worked in previous employment instead of the months they started and left. This means it is unclear if there are unexplained gaps in a staff member's previously employment.

Young people made four complaints since the last inspection. However, there is only one detailed record of a complaint. This was dealt with appropriately by the acting manager, and the young person was content with the outcome. There was no record of the other three complaints, apart from a general comment about the nature of the complaint. It is not clear if the complaint was dealt with appropriately, what actions were taken and whether the young person was satisfied with the outcome.

Behaviour incidents have decreased since the last inspection. The length of physical interventions has also reduced, and young people are learning how to manage their emotions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There have been considerable changes in staffing, including managers, over the past few months. The registered manager resigned in January, and an acting manager was in post. The acting manager and responsible individual left the organisation in May 2018. A new acting manager is temporarily in post, pending a new permanent manager starting in July 2018.

There have been many staff changes, some staff staying a short time and then leaving. The home has been reliant on agency staff over the past few weeks, as staffing numbers dropped to a low point. On occasion, agency staff outnumber permanent staff on shift. Managers try to ensure that changes of agency staff are kept to a minimum. However, young people have been cared for by many different staff and have not received consistent care from trusted adults.

There are shortfalls in staff receiving supervision. The manager was unable to find

records of supervision covering the past few months. It is impossible to see whether staff have received supervision, helping them to reflect on the progress of young people in their care, and on their own development. The records for staff training could not be found, and it is impossible to see how well staff are prepared for their role. Only a small number of staff have a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. These gaps mean that staff are not well prepared or supported to meet young people's needs.

Monitoring systems are poor. Key documents are missing from young people's files, including copies of looked-after children review meeting minutes, and health records. As a result, staff do not have all the essential information they need to meet young people's needs.

Staff morale is low. Staff express concern about staff shortages, reliance on temporary staff, staff leaving after a short time, and the negative impact on young people they care for.

The six-monthly self-auditing of the service has not been sent to the regulator. This means that the regulator is unable to scrutinise the development of the service. The home's statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect the changes in staff.

The new temporary manager and the responsible individual are realistic about the improvements that need to be made. They are devising an action plan of improvements. It is too early to quantify the impact of these proposals.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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 Limited

Registered provider address: Sherlock Healthcare Services, 20–22 Wenlock Road,
London N1 7GU

Responsible individual: Hilton Mutariswa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Julia Wright, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018