

1231812

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is one of four operated under a contract with a large local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have experienced trauma and/or placement and/or family breakdown.

The manager has been registered since September 2016 and is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 March 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 8 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2018	Full	Good
23/10/2017	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Four young people have lived at this home since the last inspection. One young person moved out, following a planned transition to semi-independent living. The manager ended a second young person's placement when the home was no longer able to keep him safe.

Two young people currently live at the home. One young person is hoping to move on to foster care and staff are helping him prepare for this. Both young people are in full-time education.

Young people on the whole make progress in all aspects of their lives. They enjoy living in a well-maintained, comfortable and homely environment, where staff work hard to create an atmosphere that is full of warmth and respect. Young people proudly display photographs and certificates throughout the home.

Young people receive good care from a consistent group of motivated and skilled staff. Staff work hard to give young people positive experiences such as days out, holidays and activities.

Professionals who visit the home consistently comment on the warm and welcoming environment and the difference that the staff make.

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

Managers do not ensure that Ofsted is always notified about incidents in the home. In May 2019, a young person made an allegation against a member of staff. Managers failed to report this safeguarding incident to Ofsted. In May 2019, managers notified Ofsted of a second incident; however, they failed to share all relevant information. This prevents the regulator having oversight of events within the home.

Since the last inspection young people have gone missing from home on 31 occasions. Managers and staff do not always take proactive action to bring about young people's return to the home. Staff complete minimal searches of key areas to look for young people and do not attempt to stay in regular contact with young people when they are missing overnight. This does not ensure that young people's welfare is safeguarded.

When young people have been missing from care, staff do not ensure that young people are offered an independent return home interview. Staff do not consistently seek an independent interview from the relevant professional. This creates a missed opportunity to help young people to talk through the reasons why they have put themselves at risk of harm.

Managers do not always ensure that all aspects of safe recruitment practice are followed. For example, managers have failed to check the reason why a person who has previously worked with children and vulnerable adults had their employment ended. Failure to follow safer recruitment processes means that unsuitable people could be recruited and have the opportunity to harm children.

Risk assessments are in place and are generally detailed; however, the missing from care risk assessment does not provide sufficient information for staff. They lack guidance regarding the frequency that staff should attempt to make telephone contact, the length of time they should search for young people, or guidance of what to do when young people are missing overnight. This does not ensure that staff secure young people's prompt return to the home.

Young people report feeling safe and well cared for. Incidents when staff need to resort to physical intervention are rare. However, occasionally records of physical intervention contain conflicting information, such as the time the restraint took place. This does not safeguard young people or staff.

The managers use creative approaches such as workshops to create posters to educate young people on issues such as bullying, gangs and child exploitation. This promotes young people's understanding of these issues.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has been in post since 2016 and is suitably qualified. She understands her role and responsibilities in caring for young people. The manager is supported by a deputy, and together they ensure that staff receive the right support and regular supervision.

The manager is motivated and has a vision for the service. She is keen to ensure that the quality of care provided to young people improves and that young people make sustained progress. The manager makes sure that staff remain up to date with their key training and actively promotes new learning via workshops and discussions at team meetings. This helps strengthen the staff's team skills and practice.

Staff enjoy working at the home. They challenge each other and report feeling well-supported by their seniors. The staff create a calm, and positive atmosphere in the home that helps young people to feel well-cared-for.

Two staff have not obtained their Level 3 qualification in residential childcare within the required timeframes. This means that not all staff have been trained to the required level to meet young people's needs. The registered manager has noted this shortfall and is taking steps to address it.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi))	01/05/2020
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). 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)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))	01/05/2020
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or	01/05/2020

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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	01/05/2020

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should 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)
This is in regard to ensuring that an accurate and full record of physical intervention is maintained.

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: 1231812

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Lara Elsegood

Registered manager: Marianne Eames

Inspector

Debbie Holder, Social Care Inspector

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