

1232657

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private company. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children whose adverse childhood experiences can lead to them exhibiting complex behaviours.

On 3 May 2022, Ofsted granted a condition of registration requiring the provider to give Ofsted three months' notice of their intention to move a child into the home. This condition was lifted in September 2023 following a monitoring visit being undertaken at the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since October 2023 and is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2024

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 22 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/06/2021	Full	Good
22/05/2019	Full	Good
12/12/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

At the time of the inspection, two children lived at the home. Shortfalls in the safeguarding of children and management oversight have limited the children's progress and experiences, and at times, this has compromised the safety of children.

Since the home reopened, there have been significant changes to the staff team. Four members of staff are no longer working in the home. This is for a variety of reasons including concerns being raised by children about staff practice, staff being redeployed to work at another home in the organisation and two staff members leaving. Changes in staffing and a reliance on agency staff have had an impact on the children's day-to-day experiences and the continuity of care they have received.

When the children have experienced challenges, staff have not always provided them with the right reassurances to help them manage their feelings appropriately. Staff have lacked the confidence and skill to manage children's behaviour. As a result, incidents have escalated and there has been an increase in children displaying challenging and unsafe behaviour. For example, there have been occasions when children have been awake until the early hours of the morning, children have assaulted staff and caused significant damage to property.

The home is spacious, and there are areas of the home which are decorated to a high standard. However, staff have removed soft furnishings from around the home as a way of managing incidents when children's behaviour is challenging as children break items and use items to hit staff. This has left parts of the home feeling cold and bare. One child's bedroom has damaged walls and broken furniture. The registered manager has acted to address this.

Children are attending education provision in line with their plans and needs. The headteacher for one child said that staff have worked hard to support the child to attend school. This is good progress for the child, who has been out of education for a significant period of time.

Staff promote healthy lifestyles for the children. Children are helped to attend health appointments and to seek medical help when needed.

The children have started to form relationships with some of the staff. During the inspection, children enjoyed playing football with staff in the garden and sitting together to eat their evening meal.

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

Shortfalls in safeguarding practice have compromised children's safety and overall well-being.

Repairs to the fabric of the building are not always completed promptly. A light switch in one child's bedroom was damaged, leaving live wires exposed. The switch had been covered with a piece of paper. Despite the potential risk, the child had continued to use this bedroom. During the inspection, the registered manager took steps to address this shortfall.

There have been several incidents that have escalated due to inconsistent and ineffective responses by staff. Staff have struggled to de-escalate situations, and on more than one occasion, children have been physically restrained when it could have been avoided. On two occasions, staff have called the police to the home to support them in managing children's behaviours. On one of these occasions, the children were handcuffed by the police. This was distressing for the children and places them at risk of being criminalised.

Managers have not ensured that agency staff have the training or guidance required to hold children appropriately or safely. For example, on one occasion, a child was held by three agency members of staff who had not all received the required training as set out in the home's behaviour management policy. This is not promoting safe behaviour management practice.

Following the use of physical intervention, children's debriefs are not effective in understanding the child's views about what happened. This is a missed opportunity for children's wishes and feelings to be heard and for children to understand why they were held. Furthermore, staff are not always debriefed when they have been involved in a physical intervention. This means that opportunities are missed for managers and staff to reflect on practice and assure themselves that practice is safe and appropriate.

Children are unable to access all areas of the home at all times of the day. The children's games room is locked as it is being used as a storage area for furnishings that have been removed from other areas of the home. On occasion, children's movements around the home have been curtailed by staff. For example, a child was not allowed downstairs to fetch a drink before they went to bed. On another occasion, a child was told to go to their bedroom as a result of not wanting to attend the children's meeting. These approaches to behaviour management are not child-centred, are not helping children to learn and restrict their movement around their home without this being properly assessed or reviewed.

Staff do not consistently challenge children when they use discriminatory language. The lack of a consistent approach by staff gives children mixed messages about appropriate behaviour and does not help them to reflect on the impact of discriminatory behaviour on others or the potential consequences for themselves of airing discriminatory views.

There has been an increase in allegations against staff. The registered manager has responded appropriately and made referrals to the local authority designated officer. However, following allegations, the staff have not been given sufficient guidance to improve practice to ensure that children are being provided with the right support. As a result, children receive inconsistent responses from staff.

The content of recording following incidents is not sufficiently detailed. Managers have failed to ensure that the records made by staff are clear and an accurate record of events. This means that managers have not assured themselves that practice is safe and promotes the welfare of children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. She is supported by an experienced home manager. Both the managers are committed to the home and the children.

The registered manager is also registered to manage another home within the organisation. The competing demands of managing two homes has impacted on her ability to adequately oversee this home. In addition, the registered manager is working directly with the children to cover gaps in the rota and this is further detracting from the time she has to manage the home.

The home does not have a stable staff team. Although the staff feel supported by the managers, they do not always enjoy working in the home because of inconsistencies in the staff team and the challenges they face. Staff informed the inspector that not knowing who they will be working with on shift can create a level of anxiety for them.

Furthermore, there have been occasions where the number of agency staff working at the home has exceeded the number of permanent members of staff. This has impacted on the quality of care that the children have received.

The children's social workers said that their children had made little progress. One social worker said that they had seen a regression in the children's behaviour, with them displaying high levels of physical and verbal aggression. However, communication with the home is effective and the social worker is kept informed.

Managers who have responsibility for the home do not ensure that there is regular monitoring, review or evaluation of the care that children receive. Shortfalls in staff practice have not been dealt with swiftly to ensure that children are safe and well cared for.

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, The 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— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that the physical condition of the home is improved and maintained to a good standard.	20 February 2024
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;	20 February 2024

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(b)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that children are supported to create and maintain positive relationships.	
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— help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that staff have the skills to support children to keep themselves safe.	20 February 2024
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 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;	20 February 2024

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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(f)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that the staff team is trained, skilled and experienced to meet the needs of children and keep them safe. Additionally, managers and leaders should review monitoring systems to improve oversight of staff practice and records.	
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	20 February 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record	20 February 2024

confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iii)(iv)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))	20 February 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that no more than half the staff on duty at any one time, by day or night, at the home are from an external agency. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.17)

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: 1232657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Rayns Way, Syston, Leicester LE7 1PF

Responsible individual: Nicola Brown

Registered manager: Rebecca Linden

Inspector

Lydia Isaac, 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 looked after children, 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 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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024