

1235576

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider and is registered to provide care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties and/or a learning disability. At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home and one child had recently moved out after living here for almost three years.

There is a suitably qualified manager in post.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 August 2024

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

requires improvement to be good

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: 22 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2023	Full	Good
07/02/2023	Full	Good
18/11/2021	Full	Good
16/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making progress in this home, but more could be done to ensure their welfare is fully promoted. The overall judgement is directly impacted on by the shortfalls reported in how well children are helped and protected and the effectiveness of leadership and management.

The child's bedroom was found to be in need of some repairs and decoration. Not enough had been done by leaders and managers to ensure that the child had a clean and well-maintained bedroom to sleep in.

Staff do not always ensure that children have well-structured and healthy routines that include sleep and access to screen time. There is sometimes a lack of planning around day-to-day activities, which leads to the child being given too much autonomy over what happens in the home each day. Despite the lack of plans, staff try hard to support children with a range of recreational activities, inside and outside of the home.

Staff do not always ensure that a healthy lifestyle is promoted and do not offer enough support around healthy lifestyle choices. The child's health needs are not being fully met, and they are not receiving the help they need. Leaders and managers are not doing enough to address this shortfall.

The educational plan for the child currently living in the home does not meet their needs, and they are not achieving to their full potential. There has not been enough challenge from leaders and managers to the wider professional network.

The child said that they 'like living in the home' and that they 'want to stay'. Staff take time to understand children's needs and build trusting relationships. Professional feedback is positive about the support of staff and the progress made by the children they look after.

Moves in and out of the home are well considered and individual for each child. Managers ensure that children are able to meet staff, are visited and are able to visit the home before moving in. This helps children to build relationships with the staff before children move in. Moves out of the home are planned and involve a similar transition plan for the child to their new home. Staff keep in touch with children who have left, and one child was able to join in with activities put on by staff after they had moved on.

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

Staff are not doing enough to keep children as safe as they should be. The child currently living in the home is not at immediate risk of harm, but not enough is being done to prevent harm or respond to known risks. Leaders and managers do not always ensure effective oversight, and there is a lack of learning.

Staff are not always following safeguarding procedures, and this left some safeguarding concerns unaddressed. There is a lack of understanding about contextual safeguarding, and not enough action was taken by staff to safeguard the child. There are several plans that describe risk and ways to reduce harm, but these plans are not up to date or relevant to the child's individual needs.

Leaders and managers are not consistent in ensuring that safeguarding professionals and the regulator are notified of all significant events. There has not been enough effective oversight of incidents, which has led to some safeguarding concerns being missed.

Leaders and managers have taken immediate action to address some of the shortfalls in safeguarding. Action was taken during the inspection to ensure that all concerns were retrospectively reported to safeguarding professionals as required.

Staff are responsive to changing situations within the home and adopt a calm approach when managing distress. Incidents are well managed by staff, who use a number of de-escalation techniques to avoid further heightened behaviours. Restraint has not been used.

Allegations are managed appropriately, and a proportionate response is taken to concerns raised about practice. Complaints are managed well and investigated, with appropriate responses given. Safer recruitment is robust and followed for all newly recruited staff.

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

Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to monitor what is happening in the home and the impact of this on children's experiences. Leaders and managers do not always use learning from incidents, complaints or feedback to inform and improve practice. There is a lack of critical challenge to accurately understand how the home is performing.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff are given appropriate guidance on managing behaviours, including the use of consequences and rewards. This has left staff confused about how to implement strategies, which has impacted on the child's understanding of appropriate behaviours.

Some of the language used by staff in records is labelling and not child-focused. Leaders and managers have not done enough to address these practice concerns.

Leaders and managers ensure that they discuss any serious incident with staff following their occurrence. However, these discussions often lack reflection and actions to follow up and improve individual practice.

Leaders and managers have not done enough to challenge the wider professional network around the child when there have been gaps in planning or decision-making. This has resulted in the child not having a clear plan for their care.

The home is managed by a permanent and experienced registered manager who has a good knowledge of the home, the staff team and the children they look after. Staff feel supported by leaders and managers and are passionate about the work they do. Leaders and managers ensure that there are enough staff to care for the children, and agency staff are not used.

Supervision and team meetings take place regularly but lack challenge or reflection on practice. There are some good examples of reflective practice being used, but this is not consistent. There are plans to make better use of the clinical practitioners to support reflection, but these plans are in the early stages.

Leaders and managers have acknowledged the gaps and shortfalls and took immediate action during the inspection to address some of the concerns.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's need; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that there is effective challenge to placing authorities when there are gaps in services or care plans are not in place.	27 September 2024
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— protect and promote each child's welfare;	27 September 2024

treat each child with dignity and respect; provide personalised care that meets the child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking into account the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; 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; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; ensure that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed and furnished so as to to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(ix)(c)(i)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that children are provided with a suitable environment which is homely and personalised. In, addition the registered provider must ensure that staff take time to understand the children's specific needs and follow the care outlined in the home's statement of purpose.	
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; 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;	13 September 2024

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the homes child protection policies; that the homes day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to effectively protect each child from harm; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that safeguarding procedures are fully understood and followed by staff. In addition, the registered person must ensure that there is robust management oversight over all safeguarding incidents.	
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; 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;	27 September 2024

demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking account and acting on—

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

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)(b)(c)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that there is robust oversight of the care provided to include effective policies. In addition, the registered person should ensure that there are systems in place to monitor and improve practice.

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: 1235576

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway,
Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Guy Mammatt

Registered manager: Louis Carroll

Inspector

Stacey Pellow, Social Care Inspector

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