

1249115

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned and managed children's home. It was registered in May 2017 to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there was only two children living at this home.

The registered manager has left and there is an acting manager in post, but they have not yet applied to become registered.

Inspection date: 27 September 2022

Date of last inspection: 4 May 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children feel frustrated because of the inconsistencies in the staff team. One child described their experience as 'turbulent and chaotic'. Another child spoke about their difficulties in building trusting relationships with staff. This does not help children to feel safe or secure.

The teacher from the on-site school works in partnership with the staff to help the children engage and make progress with their learning. One child has been helped to complete their GCSE exams and start a college course, and they have thrived in their work placement at a local nursery.

The staff capture the children's experiences by taking photos of events and enjoyable activities. However, photos are disorganised and lack quality. The timeline and occasions of when they were taken are unclear. This limits the children's ability to reflect on their journey and the memories they have of their time living at this home.

Children are supported to have meaningful time with their family and friends. Staff transport the children to meet with the key people in their lives, even when this is a considerable distance from the home. This helps children to maintain their sense of identity and sustain relationships with those who are most important to them.

Staff spend time with children exploring their thoughts and feelings about their day-to-day experiences. Conversations focus on the children's individual needs, with staff giving the children guidance and support on matters they need help with the most.

Children like watching movies at the cinema and going on shopping trips with staff. They have access to other activities through a support group that provides positive experiences for children from the local area. However, children are not always clear about the availability of activities because of the different responses from staff. This contributes to their feelings of frustration and uncertainty.

The safety of children

Some children have moved on from the home because staff have not been able to help them to feel safe. Staff have required assistance from the police on several occasions when a child's behaviours have been unmanageable. This does not help children to have a sense or a place of safety.

Managers are providing training and support to staff to help develop their knowledge, skills and effectiveness to help children cope with difficult emotions.

Staff use restraint practice when there is a risk of children or staff being harmed. However, the quality of restraint records is poor. For example, body maps are not always completed. Not all of the staff involved are spoken to after an incident occurs. On occasions, judgemental language about children has been used. This does not provide the regulator with reassurance that managers are challenging this through their management oversight.

There is a well-coordinated response when children go missing from home. Staff follow the children's individual protocols and escalate their concerns to the police when children may be in an unsafe situation. Good partnership work with one child's social worker led to an agreed plan to help reduce the likelihood of incidents reoccurring. Return home interviews are completed with children so they are able to share their concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The home continues to run without a registered manager. Plans to bring permanent management arrangements to the team have yet to be achieved. However, leaders have recruited some new staff, a deputy manager, and are actively searching for a registered manager.

Team meetings and reflective discussions that involve staff, managers and the clinical psychologist have yet to be fully embedded. This limits the team's ability to discuss the children's needs and develop their care plans. Managers have made progress in offering direction to staff when shortfalls in their practice have been identified. This helps to avoid incidents being repeated.

New staff have not been frequently supervised in line with the provider's supervision policy. This limits their progress and oversight and may lead to inconsistencies in their practice.

Managers have delayed submitting their quality-of-care review to the regulator. There is no evidence that feedback is sought from parents, social workers, or other professionals. This does not enable the regulator to have oversight of the outcomes for children.

Information about staff practice and the safeguarding of children is not easily accessible for the independent visitor. This limits their oversight and ability to evaluate whether children are effectively safeguarded.

Internal monitoring systems are not yet good enough in identifying administrative shortfalls about the children's care experience. This does not provide the regulator with reassurance that the recording systems help managers to have effective oversight of the children's care.

Managers have not provided the regulator with sufficient information when a serious incident has occurred. This prevents the regulator from having oversight and assurance that the children are protected from harm.

Managers have a development plan focused on improving the quality of care for children. They are aspirational about helping staff to develop the knowledge and skills needed to be effective in their roles. The recruitment of new staff is helping to rebuild the effectiveness of staff's care practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/04/2021	Full	Good
21/05/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be 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 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; 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)(g)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that: they embed team meetings and reflective discussions about the children's needs; they have effective monitoring systems for records in place to ensure that they are reassured that staff's practice keeps the children safe.	20 November 2022
The registered person must— The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33 (1) (4)(b))	20 November 2022
The registered person must ensure that—	20 November 2022

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 confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) The registered person must ensure that this record is scrutinised and evaluated within the required timeframe to ensure practice is necessary, proportionate, safe and effective. The registered person must ensure that all staff involved in the hold, and those that witness the hold, are spoken to within the required timeframe. The registered person must ensure that the language used by staff to record the incident is not judgemental and stigmatising. The registered person must ensure that a body map for a child is completed after each restraint incident.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	20 November 2022
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(b))	20 November 2022

The registered person must ensure that all records are available for each and every visit by the independent person to help them evaluate that children are being effectively safeguarded, and the conduct of the staff promotes the children's welfare.	
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. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (3) (4)(a) (5))	20 November 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that photos taken of the child's experiences have the dates of the events to help the child understand at what point in their time at the home the events occurred. Photos should be kept in such a way that helps the child and their family to reflect on their time living at the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1249115

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Hobart House, Oakwater Drive, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 3SR

Responsible individual: Karen Brougham

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Aaron Mccloughlin, Social Care Inspector
Rachel Walker, Social Care Inspector

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