

1250039

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

There has been no registered manager since June 2023. An acting manager is in post and has submitted their application to register as a dual manager for this home and another home within the organisation.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 August 2023

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: 9 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2022	Full	Good
21/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, the experience and progress of children require improvement due to shortfalls in the protection of children and the leadership and management of the home.

Individual support plans provide detail about children's individual needs and understanding of their childhood experiences so far. Despite this knowledge, there is no effective system in place to monitor children's progress. Staff do not always connect children's behaviours and development with their childhood experiences. Staff are unable to measure children's achievements and development, or assess what further support they may need to achieve positive outcomes.

Transitions in and out of the home are poorly recorded. Consideration is given to the identified needs of new children moving in to the home; however, children already living in the home are not always consulted. Immediate notice was given for one child's placement while they were receiving treatment in hospital. Staff did not provide emotional or practical support to this child following the notice being served.

Staff are not yet creative in helping children to develop their interests and hobbies. As a result, children have little structure or routine in place, especially during school holidays. Planned activities are one part of a child's plan to reduce the risk of missing episodes. This is not yet being achieved.

Positive relationships between the children and the staff are evident. One child said that a member of staff was 'amazing'. An external professional commented, 'She [the manager] has a good understanding of [name of child's] needs even though he hasn't lived there for long' and that staff are doing all they can to support the child.

Staff recognise the value to children of maintaining family relationships. They support children to spend time with those who are important to them, where this is safe and in their best interests. This means that children maintain important relationships with those who are close to them, and it also helps children to maintain their sense of identity.

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

Safeguarding concerns are thoroughly investigated by the manager. However, they are not always responded to in a timely manner. When children are missing from the home, actions taken by staff are not always reflected on. This means that opportunities for lessons to be learned are missed.

Staff members do not always act in line with the home's preferred method of care. Sometimes, this is a contributory factor for children's escalating behaviour. When children are held by staff, records are not sufficiently detailed. This means that children and staff do not always understand what happened. This impacts on opportunities to identify ways to reduce repeated incidents.

Staff do not manage fire or health and safety risks effectively. The current fire risk assessment does not reflect staff practice within the home, such as propping fire doors open. Routine health and safety checks are not up to date. For example, staff had not completed weekly smoke alarm checks for almost two months. Identified actions are not followed through, such as discussions with children who have refused to take part in fire drills.

Medication is stored safely. However, systems to manage medication are repetitive and confusing. Staff complete three different written records when a medicine has been taken by children. Staff do not seek medical advice when children miss prescribed medication. This means that children's health and welfare are not promoted.

Risk management plans and individual support plans are detailed. The manager and staff undertake regular reviews of these documents. The plans help staff to understand how best to support children's specific behaviours and risks. However, known triggers are not reflected on. This negatively impacts on how staff respond to children to help to avoid any future incidents.

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

Currently, there is no registered manager. An acting manager is in post. An application has been made to Ofsted for them to dual register as a manager for this home and another home within the organisation.

The manager has oversight of the care provided to children. However, this oversight lacks critical reflection, resulting in missed opportunities to learn from practice and improve the care provided to children.

Where there have been serious incidents, the manager has notified Ofsted however, not in a timely way. On one occasion, there was a delay of nine days before Ofsted were informed of the safeguarding concern. This restricts the regulator's ability to monitor how well children are safeguarded at the time of concerns.

There have been some areas of concern within the staff team, which have had an impact on working relationships. Although there continue to be some issues within the team, there is no evidence of the impact on the care provided to children. The manager addresses practice issues in individual supervisions with staff. However, supervision is not consistently taking place. As a result, staff do not always have the opportunity to reflect on their practice with a manager.

Staff feel supported by the manager. One member of staff said, 'We're supported by a great manager who is there to support both staff and young people whenever we need.' Another staff member said, '[Name of manager] has the best interests of everybody and goes above and beyond for the staff and young people.'

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. 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; 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) The registered person must ensure that all records are reviewed and monitored by the manager and clear actions	18 October 2023

are identified and acted on. In addition, the registered person must ensure that where children are educated at home, there is a clear plan and evidence of how children are supported to achieve their full potential. This also refers to ensuring that when children make a complaint or allegation, they are kept updated by the manager of outcomes to ensure that they feel listened to. Furthermore, sufficient staff must be in place to ensure that staff are not exhausted and a positive morale can be secured.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— 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. (Regulation 6 (1) (2)(b)(v)(vi)) The registered person must ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand how a child's life experience impacts on their presenting behaviours, such as managing a healthy diet. This also refers to staff ensuring that children are supported to have positive experiences and support when leaving in planned and unplanned ways.	18 October 2023
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child's interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences; and make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community; and	18 October 2023

that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b)) The registered person must ensure that staff support children take part in a range of activities to develop their social skills. Staff should also be creative in encouraging children to engage in fun activities and have structure to their day.	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c)) The registered person must ensure that systems and processes are in place to manage the safe storage and administration of medicine.	18 October 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	18 October 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should adhere to the quality standards. The responsibilities and accountabilities in this standard fall on the registered person. In practice, just as with the other standards, those responsible for the day-to-day running of homes, play a key role in enabling the registered person to fulfil the requirements of this standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.2)

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: 1250039

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Registered provider address: 2 Lymevale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6NW

Responsible individual: James Binyon

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Kathryn Hurley, Social Care Inspector
Helen Walters, 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 2023