

1250253

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation and provides permanent care for one child and a short-break service for up to three children with physical and/or learning disabilities. The service offers overnight respite stays and assessment breaks.

The manager was registered in May 2022.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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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: 16 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/12/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Generally, children have positive experiences when they visit for short breaks. However, shortfalls in relation to how well they are helped and protected, leadership and management and how well children's health needs are met have affected the quality of care.

Systems for the administration and recording of medication and gastric feeds are not effective. One child on one occasion was not given their medication due to staff having incorrect information. Although the problem was identified, no steps were taken to ensure this was addressed. The child's parent said that this could have led to the child becoming distressed. Another child has gastric feeds to supplement their diet. On occasions, the staff have not recorded whether these feeds have been given to the child. Medication records are unclear, medication lists are not accurate and dates are missed. Errors in relation to administering medication and gastric feeds mean that staff have not always ensured that children's health needs are being met.

One child uses a machine at night that provides additional oxygen to assist breathing. On one occasion, the machine was damaged during an incident and failed to work. Staff did not seek advice, and the child did not have the machine for the whole night. Following the incident, the child's parent made the managers aware of a solution for future reference. However, this advice has not been considered or included in the child's plans. Therefore, there is no guidance for staff on how to respond if this should recur.

Improvements have been made to the home environment. These include new flooring and the redecoration of children's bedrooms. However, one communal bathroom is in a poor state of repair, with marks on the flooring and walls. In addition, two doors are damaged and this had not been identified by managers. While improvement works are planned, the interior of the home needs improvement.

Staff build positive relationships with children and have a good understanding of their complex needs. Some children have significant communication needs that are clearly detailed in their plans. These plans are generally detailed and outline how children's needs will be met when they visit for breaks.

Parents were positive about the care that children receive and said that children enjoy their breaks. Managers have built positive relationships with children's parents and social workers. Feedback provided was very positive about the levels of communication from staff.

Children take part in a wide range of activities. These include trips to the beach, zoos and local farms. Activities are based on children's individual needs and preferences.

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

One child has made three allegations against staff and one against an unknown person. The records of these do not include any actions taken by managers in response to the allegations. Managers and the social care team manager discussed these allegations. However, the discussions are not recorded. The manager said that the local authority had agreed a protocol for the child in regard to allegations. However, this protocol and the allegations are not detailed in the child's care plans. Managers have also failed to notify Ofsted of the allegations. Overall, the manager's response and the records are unclear and do not evidence whether appropriate steps have been taken to safeguard the children and the staff.

A number of other safeguarding concerns have been responded to well. On these occasions, managers have shared information promptly with children's social workers to ensure that concerns can be investigated.

The staff rarely use restraint. There have been four instances and these were appropriate and proportionate. However, on two occasions, managers have been involved in restraints, and following these there has been no independent oversight. The staff are not always spoken to after incidents of restraint. Therefore, the scrutiny of restraint incidents may not be effective, and opportunities for learning may be being missed.

Children's risk assessments contain clear strategies to manage risks to children, and staff follow these. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's different risks. Staff respond well to most behavioural incidents. They intervene in ways that help children to calm down at times of distress.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to identify the shortfalls. This means that they have been ineffective in making improvements that are needed.

Managers have failed to ensure that sufficient checks are always carried out for new staff. One new member of staff did not have a photo checked to confirm identity, and gaps in their employment history were not explored. When employment checks reveal information, records of discussions about the information are unclear. The rationale behind the decision to continue with the staff's employment is not recorded. Weak recruitment checks mean that actions to ensure staff are safe to be working with children are insufficient.

The quality of recording is variable. Some records, including one safeguarding record, are recorded on loose pieces of paper. Other records, including medication

records, have incorrect or missing dates. When a concern was identified in relation to the quality of one member of staff's record-keeping, this was not addressed with them.

Managerial monitoring of the home has been ineffective. Managers have failed to identify shortfalls in the administration and recording of medication. The poor quality of records has not been identified. The manager was unaware of gaps in supervision records. The manager was unable to provide evidence as to how allegations have been managed. Shortfalls in recruitment checks have not been identified. The manager carries out monthly monitoring checks, but these fail to identify shortfalls. Therefore, shortfalls have not been addressed and improvements have not been made.

Although staff said that they feel well supported by managers, several staff have gone over 12 weeks between supervisions. These include the manager, who is relatively new in post. This is not in line with the service's policy. Irregular supervisions have meant that the opportunities for staff to consider how they are meeting the needs of children are being missed. In addition, the manager has not been provided with the support to oversee the service effectively.

Staff are provided with a wide range of training. This includes training specific to supporting children's needs. This helps to ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to undertake their roles.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that children's plans include relevant information about specific medical equipment.	19 September 2022
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— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii)(b)) In particular, ensure that all allegations against staff are managed in line with the home's safeguarding policies and that records of actions taken are kept.	19 September 2022

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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular: ensure that the manager has clear oversight and understanding of any allegations and of medication systems; ensure that records are clear and accurate; ensure that any shortfalls are acted on to make improvements.	19 September 2022
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— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c))	29 August 2022
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; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which	19 September 2022

the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the 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))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	19 September 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, 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. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i))	19 September 2022
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)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	19 September 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of children. In particular, they should ensure that children’s bathrooms and other communal areas are maintained to a good standard and that any damage is identified and repaired promptly. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. In particular, ensure that when incidents involve managers, there is independent

scrutiny of the incident. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: 1250253

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: 80 Compair Crescent, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 0EH

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Hayley Hatcher

Inspector

Joe Cox, Social Care Inspector

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