

1250253

Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation and provides a short-break service. The service offers overnight respite stays and assessment breaks.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2019.

Inspection date: 3 March 2021

This monitoring visit

The visit was conducted following concerns raised with Ofsted by a third party. The visit included on-site and remote inspection activities. The site visit included a tour of the accommodation, a discussion with the registered manager and a sample of the records. The remote activities included telephone calls to parents, further discussions with the manager and a review of records.

The short-break service has continued throughout the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and has offered a reduced service based on priority. At the time of the visit, there were 22 children using the service for two or more nights a month.

During the periods of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, the manager provided reduced allocations for each family. This ensured that all families were offered an allocated break. A priority risk-rating system takes into account the child's school provision and each family's circumstances. This system has meant that some families have not been able to have their preferred days, which has resulted in a complaint. This complaint has been processed in line with the home's complaints procedure and investigated appropriately.

As a temporary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic, the manager has provided additional breaks for children. The extra breaks have been offered away from the main house, which means that more children can safely use the service. The children who have been selected for the additional breaks are those who are likely to benefit from this option.

The staff have worked hard to find safe activities for the children. The children have visited local parks and outdoor amenities, including the local rural life museum. Regular walks and the spacious garden provide the children with fresh air and the opportunity to exercise.

The environment offers a choice of activity space for the children. The conservatory, garden and outdoor sensory den provide areas outside the communal living and dining area. The kitchen has been freshly decorated. However, the paintwork and woodwork in other rooms need updating. The environment is unwelcoming and has an institutional feel. The hardcourt entrance area has items waiting to go to the refuse collection site and is not inviting for the children on their arrival. The manager has sourced a grant to develop and improve this area.

The manager has failed to undertake an investigation about a serious incident or to notify this incident to Ofsted. During a short break, a child sustained an unexplained and serious bruise that was not properly investigated. This was despite questions from the child's parent about how it happened. The manager notified the parent and responded to the parent's questions. However, the records of the child's activities contradict the child's version of what happened and do not reflect the severity of the injury. Failure to find the actual cause of the bruise means that there was insufficient explanation and exploration of any associated concerns.

The independent person's visits have taken place both in person and virtually during the lockdown restriction periods. The visitor's reports fail to include any feedback from parents or professionals and do not raise actions that drive the service to improve. Most of the children are not able to communicate verbally. Therefore, without talking to children's parents, the children's views and experiences are not captured.

Two of the requirements raised at the last inspection have been met and two have been restated. The recommendation has not been reviewed at this visit and will be evaluated at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/04/2019	Full	Good
11/07/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/03/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 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— 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)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, ensure that the accommodation is well maintained and appropriately decorated.	31 May 2021
The registered person must implement a policy which— is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular— provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d))	31 March 2021

In particular, ensure that the records demonstrate the investigations undertaken when children have been accidentally injured.	
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))	31 March 2021
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (5))	31 May 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This particularly relates to the recruitment of staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor concerns raised to Ofsted.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1250253

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: Suffolk House, 7 Hydra Orion Court, Addison Way,
Great Blakenham, Ipswich IP6 0LW

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Katy Plumridge

Inspector

Deirdra Keating, Social Care Inspector

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