

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, which is run by a private organisation, provides a short-break service by offering 'Good Company' overnight stays and 'Getaway' assessment breaks.

The registered manager has been in post since August 2017.

Inspection date: 11 July 2018

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: 5 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
27/06/2017	Full	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 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— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; 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. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(iv)(ix))	12/08/2018
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 interest 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	12/08/2018

expand the child's interests and preferences; and 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)(b))	
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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(v)(vii)(b))	12/08/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— 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 the 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(f)(h))	16/09/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment	12/08/2018

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 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— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and 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)(a)(b)(c)(d))	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation; The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(1)(a)(b)(4)(a)(b))	12/08/2018
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or	12/08/2018

has been, so absent. Before implementing, or making any amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to, the missing child policy, the registered person must— consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person; and have regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. The registered person must keep under review and, as necessary, revise the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 34(4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	12/08/2018
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that a registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, hold a register of children using the service.	12/08/2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and	12/08/2018

the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.	
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(1)(4)(a)(b)(5))	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. (Regulation 45(1))	12/08/2018

Recommendations

- Children should have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning, unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19)
 - In some cases, such as children's homes caring for children with complex care needs, restraint may be necessary as a consequence of a child's impairment or disability. A child's Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) plan or statement of special educational needs may contain detail about planned and agreed approaches to restraint or restraint techniques to be applied in the day-to-day routine of the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.43)
- In particular, review the use of any environmental restraints such as locking the front door and use of safety gates. When these environmental restraints are deemed necessary to safeguard the child, ensure that the details of the use are documented as agreed with the child, their family and other professionals, and included in the child's EHC plan or the home's short-break plan.
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Record information on individual children in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

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

The children's care plans are not up to date. The plans do not contain the relevant information required to enable staff to adequately care for the children in a meaningful way. There are no short-break plans or risk assessments for new children. No information was in place in relation to one child's religious and cultural needs, other than their basic dietary requirements. This child's plan failed to include that the child only eats

halal meat. Staff spoken to during the inspection lacked knowledge of how to meet this child's cultural needs.

The manager had a different understanding to a staff member about the provision of personal care for one child. A senior member of staff said that only staff of the same gender as the child could give personal care to the child, whereas the manager said that personal care can be given by either male or female staff. No consideration has been given to the child's cultural preferences, and there is no evidence that the child's parents or the social worker have been consulted. Personal care arrangements are not contained in the care plan. Consequently, the approach to personal care may be open to interpretation by the staff, which means possible inconsistencies for the child.

The children are taken out by staff to local parks in the community and spend time at the home doing arts and crafts. However, the home does not promote new experiences and interests for some children who come to stay, because staff do not always take the children out on planned activities. Six planned bowling activities did not take place, with only one record of the reason why the activity had not gone ahead. The manager was unable to provide any further information except to say that one swimming activity had taken place in the last nine months for one child. There is no computer available for the children to use. A member of staff said, 'The old one is broken and there is no money to replace it.' This does not reflect the aim, as detailed in the statement of purpose, that children will be given opportunities to explore activities and experiences previously unavailable to them, and will be able to access a range of resources, such as having the use of computers.

The home provides a clean, comfortable and homely environment for the children to come and stay in. Parents and professionals spoken to during the inspection commented that the staff are caring and committed. Staff know the children well, which bridges the gap in care planning to a large degree, reducing impact. However, the impact is not reduced for all of the children.

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

There are no up-to-date procedures or guidance for the staff to follow should a child go missing. There is a lack of missing-from-care risk assessments and staff spoken to during the inspection were not fully aware of what to do if a child goes missing. There are emergency grab packs for children who may go missing. However, not all of these packs contained photos of the children, and staff confirmed that they do not take these packs out with them on trips. Staff do not fully identify areas of risk and the actions to be taken to reduce such risks if an incident occurs. This has had no impact on children to date, as there have been no incidents of children going missing.

There are no basic risk assessments to ensure the children's safety. There is no clear guidance for staff, either electronically or in document format, on how to support the children's complex needs on a day-to-day basis. Discussions during the inspection with

professionals, parents and staff demonstrated that the staff know how to meet the children's needs. However, the lack of information in risk assessments means that there is potential for confusion and inconsistency in the approach to safeguarding children effectively.

There have been no physical interventions since the last inspection. However, the use of environmental restraints, such as locking the front door and the use of safety gates, has not been recorded. When the use of such measures has been deemed necessary to safeguard the children, the records of the use have lacked details of consent and agreement with the child, their family and other professionals, and have not been included in the child's education, health and care plan or the home's short-break plan. The use of environmental restraints is not recorded in the home's statement of purpose.

The recruitment and vetting of every member of staff who is new to the home is insufficient. Suitable evidence of identity is not held for all staff. One member of staff has not had a Disclosure and Barring Service check completed prior to commencing work, and there were no copies of staff qualifications on the files that were reviewed during the inspection. Recruitment processes are not robust and do not protect children from unsuitable people coming to work at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager does not ensure that the staff receive suitable supervision at regular intervals. Supervision records evidence that supervision for some staff is between seven and 15 weeks behind schedule. Lack of regular supervision means that staff are not provided with a formal meeting to discuss any concerns that they may have, or to review their professional development.

New staff do not receive a good induction into the home. The manager is unsure of the probationary period for staff, and staff training is not robust. Of the 14 staff, eight have out-of-date training in safeguarding, conflict management and first aid. The staff are not adequately equipped with the skills required to care for the children.

There is a lack of clarity regarding who deals with safeguarding concerns in the absence of the responsible individual.

The manager was unable to provide a clear log of admissions to and discharges from the short-break service. She was unable to find the records for one child in relation to an incident, and when asked to show the times when the child had stayed at the home was unable to, stating that 'all of the information has been archived' and 'there is no longer a central register of admissions held as this ceased some time ago'. Without the central admission log, it is unclear which children have stayed at the home.

The manager has not undertaken a quality of care review. The manager was asked how she monitors and reviews staff practice and addresses any arising actions. She said that she asks the staff to update care plans, risk assessments or undertake activities, and

relies on them to do those tasks when she asks them. A lack of a review by the manager has meant that shortfalls in tasks being completed have not been highlighted. Monitoring reports written by the independent visitor lack information, and do not give a clear overview of the home or reflect the views of the staff and the children. The service is not monitored effectively and potential shortfalls are not fully identified.

The manager has met only one requirement, in part, of the seven requirements raised at the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: Achieving Aspirations Community Interests Company, Suffolk House, 7 Hydra Orion Court, Addison Way, Great Blakenham, Ipswich IP6 0LW

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Mandy Jones

Inspectors

Cathy Russell: social care inspector

Joanna Heller: social care inspector

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