

SC1250521

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home, part of a group, offers care for up to four children who have been identified as likely to benefit from residential care.

The registered manager post is currently vacant.

Inspection date: 4 February 2020

Date of last inspection: 5 June 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The manager has been in post at the home for several months, but they have not yet applied to Ofsted to register. Internal monitoring is being completed to schedule by the manager but there is a delay in the monitoring reports being submitted to Ofsted for review.

Children are making good progress. Overall, staff were able to demonstrate some significant improvements for children. One child has markedly increased their engagement in education and is now following a full timetable in a mainstream school. Children are supported to reduce risk-taking or anti-social behaviours, such as bullying. For one child, increased family contact, and engagement in therapy have led to plans being made for them to return home.

When children need additional support, for example when missing-from-care incidents increase, staff demonstrate diligent practice to try to support the child to reduce these behaviours. This includes attempting to locate the child when they are missing, and working in close partnership with the placing authority and the police to put in place shared strategies to protect them.

The organisation's placement matching process lacks rigour. Risks are identified but there is little development of strategic thinking around managing identified risks.

There have been some changes to the staffing team at the home. The new manager feels well supported by senior leaders and managers from other homes in the group. Inspectors spoke to new staff members who described a positive experience of induction. Staff who are new to the service sometimes have to wait too long to get access to important elements of their initial training.

The team describes a supportive culture in the home. Staff are encouraged to learn from their mistakes in a blame-free and constructive manner. Regular team meetings and debriefs help staff to process and reflect on their practice.

The manager has dealt with one allegation in this period about staff practice. The investigation was very thorough, and outcomes were communicated clearly to the child concerned.

Progress has been made against some requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection. However, it has been necessary to repeat a requirement in relation to effectively assessing risks when a new child comes to live in the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/06/2019	Full	Good
18/10/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/08/2017	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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)) In particular, to ensure that risk management strategies are clear when a new child accesses the service.	30/04/2020
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 to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)) In particular, to ensure that new staff complete mandatory components of their training as soon as possible after their employment commences.	30/04/2020
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. 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. (Regulation 45 (1)(4)(a))	30/04/2020

Care Standards Act 2000 Any person who carries on or manages an establishment or agency of any description without being registered under this Part in respect of it (as an establishment or, as the case may be, agency of that description) shall be guilty of an offence. (Regulation 11 (1))	30/04/2020
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Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 1250521

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Registered provider address: 424 Margate Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6SJ

Responsible individual: Carol Bradley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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