

1250521

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 manger is in the final stages of registration.

Inspection date: 18 October 2018

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 23 May 2018

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 requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

The recent trajectory of improvement identified at the last inspection has continued, and key aspects of the quality of care provided to the children have improved. Before they move in, the needs of children are understood better and the plans for their care and keeping them safe are clearer. Children's engagement in education has improved.

Although the requirements and recommendation set at the last inspection are regarded as having been met, further improvement is needed in the urgency and effectiveness with which leaders and managers respond to poor performance by external agencies in meeting children's needs, for example in ensuring that children are provided with a continuous education in an appropriate setting.

The ongoing redecoration, furnishing and maintenance of the interior of the home have improved the homely atmosphere for the children. No similar steps have been taken to improve the outside space, which the manager's development plan does not address sufficiently.

The children who have moved into the home since the last inspection have settled quickly and are developing a sense of belonging. Staff are focused on the needs of all of the children and are alert to actual and potential risks. Staff are enthusiastic in supporting the children to engage in positive social activities outside the home. However, staff need to find more creative ways to support children to sustain their interest in these activities.

The children have benefited from a stable and more cohesive core team of staff, who provide increasingly consistent care. There have been several staff changes during this inspection period and further improvement is needed in identifying, recruiting, inducting and retaining suitable staff. A positive culture of regular, meaningful staff supervision has not yet become firmly established for the whole staff team.

The quality of care provided for the children is improving under the steady and clear leadership of the manager, who enjoys the support of his staff team.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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?

Recommendations

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs (see regulations 5(c)). Staff should act as champions for their children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- Children's homes staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
- Residential child care should provide a safe and stimulating environment in high-quality buildings, with spaces that support nurture and allow privacy as well as common spaces and spaces to be active. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 5, paragraph 1.10)
- As set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
In particular, have standardised procedures in place that ensure that the best decisions are made in selecting and appointing suitable staff.

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 difference 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.

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.

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 CT12 6SJ

Responsible individual: David Knowles

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector:

John Pledger, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 2018