

1250915

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 14 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 21 November 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

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 declined in effectiveness.

The three young people who were living at the home during the last inspection in November 2017 continue to live at the home. No new young people have been admitted to the home since then.

Since the last inspection, there have been a number of shortfalls in safeguarding practice, which have had a detrimental impact on the young people's welfare. Staff have not consistently followed risk assessments and care plans which detailed the need for continual supervision of young people. For example, on at least one occasion, two young people have gone missing from home together, late at night. This missing-from-home episode went undetected by staff. This represents a significant failure in recognising and responding to a serious risk to young people.

Electronic monitoring is in place on doors from the landing and external doors. The purpose of this is to safeguard young people's welfare. However, on occasions, the door

alarms do not alert staff when young people open their bedroom doors. Consequently, young people have been able to spend unsupervised time together without staff being aware. This is not effective safeguarding practice, and has led to serious incidents in the home.

More positively, there is clear evidence that the manager and staff team make a good effort to work with other professionals to meet young people's needs. Stakeholder feedback is positive, despite some of the recent challenges. One social worker said: 'I have been impressed with the effective action taken by the manager to address safeguarding concerns. He has been open and transparent throughout, and implements appropriate strategies to reduce risks.' Another said: 'Management have responded promptly to recent safeguarding concerns, and issues are resolved thoroughly and carefully.'

Investigations into allegations or unsafe practice are dealt with promptly by the manager. Concerns relating to staff practice are taken seriously and thorough investigations are carried out by the manager. The investigation report provides a clear overview of the action taken, the outcome and recommendations. This demonstrates that lessons are learned, which helps improve practice.

Clear evidence was presented at this inspection that staff have participated in further training that supports their professional development. Additionally, the manager has provided updated guidance to ensure that all staff are informed and confident in their responses to situations that compromise the safety of young people.

Despite some of the recent challenges, young people continue to make progress in a number of aspects of their lives. All young people attend full-time education and are making good progress. Staff continue to support young people to follow their interests and hobbies. This includes animal care, visiting a local music studio, sporting activities and attending a youth club. These experiences allow young people to develop their social skills, meet new people and develop self-confidence.

Young people benefit from gradually increased contact in line with their plans. For example, one young person has progressed to unsupervised overnight contact with relatives. This represents a key area of progress for this young person. The manager ensures that there is careful consideration of how best to progress contact. As a result, young people can enjoy safe and meaningful contact with significant people in their lives.

In conclusion, there has been a decline in effectiveness at this home since the last inspection. That said, the manager has a clear improvement plan and is working hard to improve safeguarding practice. The manager has acknowledged that this has been a challenging period. But lessons have been learned and the manager and staff team are committed to getting things back on track for the benefit of the young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2017	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 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: 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; and staff 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)(a)(i)(b))	15/03/2018

These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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.

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: 1250915

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Karen Brandon

Registered manager: Lee Matthews

Inspector

Ceri Evans, social care inspector

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