

1252120

Registered provider: Paddock House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to six children with emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2017 and is appropriately qualified.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 6 October 2021 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/12/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/07/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently six children living in the home. The inspector spoke with four children individually during this inspection.

The children make good progress. They are happy and settled at the home. Staff provide the children with good-quality care in a safe and secure environment. The children know that staff care about them. As a result, they feel listened to and valued. The children also enjoy positive relationships with one another.

Children are encouraged to have fun and enjoy themselves in the home and their local community. The children enjoy trying new activities, such as visiting theme parks and different cities. They are particularly looking forward to their Easter holiday trip this year. These experiences help to build the children's confidence and improve their social skills.

The children have lots of opportunities to have their voices heard, through spending quality one-to-one time with staff or at the children's meetings. These opportunities help the children to feel involved in the planning of their personal care and activities.

Staff understand the importance of children seeing their close family and friends. They support the children to keep in touch with those who are important to them. Staff proactively address any difficulties that arise in these relationships so that the children continue to have stable support networks around them. The children particularly enjoy the time that they spend with their friends in the community. This means that the children enjoy similar social experiences to their peers.

The manager and carers support the children to attend their education provisions. Children engage with their learning and make clear progress. When children are home-schooled, the staff work hard to motivate them to learn. As the children become older, staff support them well to prepare for independent living.

The children enjoy good health. Staff are proactive in supporting the children to attend medical and healthcare appointments. Staff understand the children's health needs and work effectively with the children's families and other health services to ensure that the children lead healthy lifestyles. Staff support the children to make informed decisions about having the COVID-19 vaccination.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff and the manager put in place risk assessments and individualised crisis-management plans to help keep the children safe. The risk assessments are regularly reviewed so that the staff have the most up-to-date information to care for the children safely. As a result, children receive predictable, consistent responses

during challenging times. This adds to children's feelings of security in the environment and in their relationships with the adults who care for them.

When the children are absent from the home without permission, the staff and the manager follow safeguarding protocols. During this inspection, a child was missing from school. Staff continuously communicated with the child's family and partner agencies during the child's absence. In addition, they travelled a good distance to check on the child's welfare, while efforts continued to encourage the child to return home. As a result, staff located the child in a short space of time.

The staff use rewards and sanctions to promote positive behaviours. Overall, the use of sanctions is fair, and they are restorative in nature. However, some records are written in a way that does not distinguish between fact and opinion. The lack of factual information in the records hinders the manager's ability to review the effectiveness of the sanction. It also means that the children's records contain information that may be misleading and not helpful to them.

The manager carries out an impact risk assessment prior to accepting new children into the home. He considers all of the known information about the child before they move in. However, the needs of the children already living at the home are not always considered fully in this process. Furthermore, the quality of the manager's evaluation in the impact risk assessment is not consistently good. This means that it is difficult to establish how each of the children will be supported, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. It also means that the admission process has not been effective as risks are not always fully evaluated. This has the potential to lead to poor matching of the children, which may result in children's placements being disrupted.

The manager informs the relevant agencies of significant incidents that involve the children. However, he has not notified Ofsted of two serious incidents. This oversight has prevented Ofsted from scrutinising how significant incidents and potential safeguarding matters are investigated. This prevents Ofsted from being assured that the manager and staff have taken effective action to safeguard the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. The manager is well regarded by the children, who said that he is a positive influence in their lives.

Children's records are incomplete. A review of the children's documents identified that important documents, such as minutes from children looked after reviews, are missing from the children's files. This means that children do not have access to their own records and cannot take part fully in the personalisation of the care that they receive. In addition, the manager cannot be assured that he and the staff are providing care in line with the children's most up-to-date care plans.

The manager's monitoring and review systems are not used effectively and shortfalls in the record-keeping have not been identified. Ineffective monitoring and review systems limit the manager's ability to assess whether the care provided to the children is in the children's best interests.

The manager deals with complaints appropriately. However, the complaints are not always recorded in the complaint log. This oversight prevents those who are providing independent scrutiny from having access to all of the accurate information.

Face-to-face staff training has been affected by COVID-19. Two new staff have not undertaken the provider's mandatory training, which would enable them to support the children when they are in crisis. The manager ensures that there are sufficiently trained staff on each shift to support the children, and he has arranged for the new staff members to receive the mandatory training.

Staff benefit from regular informal and formal supervision. A reflective approach is used, which offers staff space to discuss the needs of the children and their own well-being. Staff spoke highly of the support from their manager and feel part of a team.

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, the 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that the impact risk assessments are fully evaluated to reflect how children will receive care and support in line with the home's statement of purpose.	18 April 2022
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that the children looked after review documents are obtained and kept up to date.	18 April 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	18 April 2022

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that the staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded 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)

Information about this 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: 1252120

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Paddock House Limited

Registered provider address: B3 Kingfisher House, Team Valley, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE11 0JQ

Responsible individual: Susan Lincoln

Registered manager: Steven Miller

Inspector

Cherie Chen, Social Care Inspector

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