

1252120

Registered provider: Paddock House Limited

Assurance 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 social difficulties.

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

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 7 December 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children are making good progress with their education. The staff support the children to attend school. Staff request homework from the school when a child chooses not to attend school trips. They support the child to complete this in the home. This enables the child to continue to develop and learn.

Children who move out of the home are supported by the staff. When this is in an unplanned way, staff maintain contact with the child to allow a positive ending to take place. This helps repair relationships and provides the children with a sense of belonging.

Children have monthly meetings with the staff to share their views about the home. These records are now typed at the request of the children. They reflect an account of the discussions held and capture the children's views and feelings. Issues that are raised by the children are recorded as being addressed or acted on. This allows the manager to be assured that the children's wishes and feelings are considered and addressed and helps children to feel listened to.

Staff continue to develop their professional relationships with the children's family members. The manager has responded appropriately to the feedback from one parent. The staff now communicate regularly with parents and prepare a monthly report so that they know their children's progress and achievements. This helps to build trusting relationships between the staff and parents, and it helps the parents to understand the progress that their child is making.

The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. Children can personalise their bedrooms and have input into the general decor of the home. However, children could not freely access one area of the home that contained their gaming equipment. This room had been locked due to an incident that had happened several days earlier. The manager had not reviewed the situation, meaning that the children were unable to access this area of the home for a longer period of time than necessary.

The safety of children

The staff generally support children well when they are distressed. During one incident, staff demonstrated particularly skill in helping children to feel safe when other children were in crisis. Staff sought to ensure the personal safety of all those in the home while helping those children who were in distress. This approach helps children to feel safe. However, during a different incident, staff called the police to

manage a child's behaviour. The manager noted that this was not appropriate and he is addressing this with the staff.

The manager has updated many of the safeguarding policies in the home, including those regarding allegations and complaints. These have been shared with the staff. The manager has demonstrated an improved understanding of sharing information with other providers to safeguard children.

Children's risk assessments are regularly updated. They reflect the children's known risks and the strategies that the staff should use to mitigate these risks. This includes how to manage the children's behaviours and whether the children should be held. However, the children do not have personalised plans for when they go missing from the home. This results in an inconsistent approach from the staff to keep the children safe.

All visitors to the home must report to the office entrance and sign in. There are clear signs indicating this both externally and internally. All staff are aware of the importance of this. This helps to improve the children's safety.

Consequences are only used if necessary and are restorative in nature. While these are recorded as an outcome on an incident log, they are not recorded formally as a strategy to manage the children's behaviour. This prevents the manager from evaluating if the consequence is effective and from making any necessary adjustments to the consequence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager continues to value spending time with the children. He spends as much time with them as he can. However, he acknowledges that this has been to the detriment of managing the home at times.

The manager has an improved monitoring and review system in place. This ensures that all of the staff regularly update all of the necessary documents required to help them to care for the children. However, the manager was unaware that one record reflected that the staff did not search for a child that was missing from the home. This lack of oversight prevents the manager from challenging practice to improve children's safety.

The external scrutiny and monitoring of the home has improved. The independent visitor and the manager have drafted an agreement of expectations. The independent visitor makes clear recommendations to assist the manager in improving the care given to the children.

Supervision sessions and team meetings are regular and are well documented. They allow the staff to reflect on the needs of the children, and they provide them with an opportunity to discuss their feelings. However, supervision session records and team meeting minutes do not accurately capture whether a child or staff member has made a particular statement, and they do not capture the manager's responses to a

staff member's comments. This prevents the manager from having a clear and accurate account of events.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
15/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/05/2019	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 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. The registered person must ensure that the date and circumstances of any measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child are included in each child's case records. (Regulation 36, (1)(a)(b)(c) Schedule 3) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all consequences placed on children are recorded as consequences. This is restated.	14 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of the staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home. In particular, the registered person should ensure each child has a personalised plan that staff should follow when the child goes missing from the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)
- The registered person should ensure that the children are able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions must be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. In particular, the

registered person should ensure that decisions to lock areas of the home for safeguarding reasons are reviewed as soon as possible. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

- The registered person should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, the manager should ensure records of supervision sessions and minutes of team meetings accurately reflect discussions held, including whether opinions reflected in these discussions are the opinions of staff or children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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

Inspectors

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector
Honor Hamshaw, Social Care Inspector

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