

1257706

Registered provider: Gravitas Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home has been in operation since June 2018. It is a privately run home that provides accommodation for up to two children or young people. The children and young people require care and emotional support that promotes their well-being and safety. The manager was registered at the same time that the home was registered.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 October 2018

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: none

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Inspection type

Inspection judgement

no previous inspections

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; and provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)) In particular, ensure that all recommendations agreed at strategy meetings are adhered to and that direct work is regularly undertaken in the areas set out in the care plan, behaviour management plan and risk assessment.	28/11/2018
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(vii)) In particular, ensure that each child has an appropriate education provision provided in a timely manner that will support their learning and development.	28/11/2018
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5)) In particular, ensure that all staff receive the training as set out in the statement of purpose, including child sexual exploitation and self-harm training, to a level that equips them to meet the	28/11/2018

needs of the young people in their care.	
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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d)) In particular, ensure that all the recommendations made in the fire risk assessment are implemented without delay.	12/11/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that all staff receive supervision at the frequency set out in the home's policy.	28/11/2018
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(2)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, ensure that all areas in the home are decorated to a suitable standard, suitable locks are fitted to bathrooms, damaged and worn furnishings are repaired, replaced and stored appropriately.	28/11/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals. ('Guide to the

children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)

In particular, ensure that further monitoring systems are implemented to detect deficiencies in practice and improve the quality of care.

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, ensure that all of the staff have undertaken fire practice and/or a fire drill at regular intervals. That all staff are named in the fire log record to enable the manager to monitor that everyone has received training in this area.

- The information set out in the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)

In particular, ensure that the manager undertakes a more detailed assessment of a child's needs along with the impact risk assessment prior to admission. This is to ensure that there is good matching of a new placement and thorough checks that the home can meet each child's needs.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

This is the home's first inspection after being in operation for four months. The experience and progress of the young people is mixed. The young people have started to build positive relationships with the staff. As a result, some young people living at the home have made some progress in keeping themselves safer and adhering to their daily life routines and boundaries. However, for others they continue to be unsettled, their engagement with staff is limited, and their behaviours continue to put them at risk.

The staff recognise the importance of education, and one young person's positive engagement and attendance has increased but is yet to be sustained. Although the manager has requested an education placement for a young person, there has been a delay in this being organised by the placing authority. This has reduced the young person's ability to progress in education and has not assisted in engaging the young person in positive daily routines.

The young people are registered with health services and they receive advice and guidance on how to maintain good physical health. This includes being encouraged to eat a balanced and healthy diet. One young person regularly attends the gym. However, key work has not yet had a positive impact for all young people. The young people are

still involved in drinking alcohol, substance misuse and smoking. The young people have declined most health check-ups. The staff continue to work to encourage and support the young people to attend all health appointments and staff work with other agencies to improve and promote the young people's good health.

The consultation and gathering of the young people's views and opinions is routinely obtained through daily discussions, key-work sessions and young people's meetings.

There are opportunities for the young people to take part in social and leisure pursuits in the home and the community. A young person said: 'We do get asked if we want to do activities, but I prefer to spend time with my friends. I have been to the cinema a couple of times.' The engagement in social activities with the staff is limited. As a result, young people routinely spend time away from the home. This facilitates them taking part in inappropriate activities that hinder their positive progress.

The young people enjoy regular contact with their families. The staff work alongside young people and their families to maintain or rebuild positive relationships. This promotes a sense of identity and provides essential support networks for young people with those who are important to them.

The young people benefit from having direct-work sessions with the staff on the areas set out in their care plans. However, the records do not demonstrate that these sessions are regularly undertaken to assist the young person's understanding and making positive changes.

The home's communal areas are well furnished. However, the home is already showing signs of wear and tear. There are marks on the walls in the hallway, there are damaged bedroom wardrobes, the lock on the bathroom is broken and the fabric on a couple of the dining room chairs is damaged. Two walls have recently been plastered in bedrooms and require painting. There is a shortage of storage facilities and some items have been stored inappropriately. The lack of prompt action to remedy the defects in the building, its furnishings and fittings, detract from the positive environment that the young people live in.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The young people do not experience bullying as they receive close and direct supervision from staff that maintains positive peer relationships.

The staff are aware of the risks posed to the young people. The young people are kept safer because staff implement the clear strategies set out in individual risk assessments that are reviewed and updated regularly.

The strategies and protocols followed by staff do not, in all instances, keep the young people safe. Risk-taking behaviour persists. Missing from care incidents have reduced, but continue to occur. The young people receive, but do not take on board, the frequent advice, information, support and guidance on the dangers and consequence of going missing, anti-social behaviour and taking illegal drugs. The exposure to the risk of child sexual exploitation remains a concern for one young person. Safeguarding strategy

meetings have taken place. A professional did state that a recommendation from a strategy meeting had not been immediately implemented. However, at the time of the inspection, those young people at high risk of harm had two-to-one support from staff and other protection protocols were being followed. Action had been taken with the issuing of a harbouring notice on an individual in the community. These actions did support protecting the young people from harm.

The home undertakes monthly fire drill practices and routine checks on the fire alarm system. However, the staff involved in these drills are not named. Agency staff working at the home are not recorded as being instructed in the fire procedures. Therefore, the manager cannot demonstrate that all staff working at the home have received training in what to do in the event of a fire. Action has commenced to implement the recommendations made in a recently undertaken fire risk assessment. However, some actions still require completion.

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

The registered manager has been in post since June 2018 when the home opened. She has the relevant experience in working with children and young people. She holds a social work and management qualification.

The manager demonstrates an understanding of the young people's needs, their experience and the progress some have made since their admission to the home. She is clear on the current care and safety strategies, and the action that is being taken by the staff team to try to keep young people safe in line with their plans, together with support from other agencies.

Collaborative working with professionals is taking place with social workers, the police and child sexual exploitation support staff. A professional said: 'Communication and the sharing of information is good.' The staff inform professionals of the progress of the young people, as well as when any serious concerns arise.

The core staff team has suitable experience and it demonstrates an awareness of the young people's needs. This has assisted the staff team to start to build trusting relationships with the young people. As a result, the staff are able to engage with young people more positively over time.

There has been a focus on weekly staff meetings to assist the staff in being clear on the care and support to be provided to the young people. All staff interviewed report that good teamwork exists, and that the manager is supportive. However, formal supervision has not been consistently provided to all staff. As a result, the close monitoring of the quality of care being delivered is not effective.

Most staff have undertaken mandatory training. Some of the staff hold a level 3 qualification to work with children and young people and others are registered to undertake the level 3 training. However, there are deficits in some areas of staff training. Not all staff have undertaken training in child sexual exploitation and self-harm. This falls short of the home's statement of purpose that states all staff will undertake this training. In addition, the training is required to be able to understand and meet the needs of the

young people currently living at the home.

The manager has undertaken impact risk assessments to support matching the placements of the young people admitted to the home; not all relevant areas have been included. The wider exploration of the referral information did not take place. This could have a detrimental effect on young people in placement whose needs are not compatible.

Monitoring includes the monthly independent regulation 44 visits and audits undertaken by the manager. However, several shortfalls identified on this inspection indicate that the monitoring systems are not robust enough and prevent the quality of care provided being consistently good for the young people.

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.

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: 1257706

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gravitas Care Limited

Responsible individual: Kathryn Bell

Registered manager: Karen Hodgson-Clark

Inspector

Debbie Foster: social care inspector

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