

1268886

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Home Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The home's statement of purpose states that the home provides care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in May 2018. The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2020.

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 9 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 9 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2019	Full	Good
20/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were four children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Staff and managers support children to understand their rights. They actively and regularly gather children's views and ensure that they have advocates where necessary. One child was supported to share his views with the courts and his social work team. This demonstrates that children feel listened to and are supported to be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Staff support children to attend school. When children have been excluded from school, staff try hard to encourage children to engage in alternative education. One teacher said, 'All the children from the home have made progress in our experience. Currently, we have two students, both of whom have a persistent history of non-attendance at school but have made significant progress with us, and through the support of the home.'

Staff and managers ensure that culture and diversity are championed. Staff act as positive role models and actively encourage and celebrate differences between all members of the household. This has helped children to feel accepted and has given them a sense of belonging.

Staff support children to spend time with their family when it is safe to do so. For example, staff support children to maintain relationships with siblings, parents and extended family. This positive support helps children to maintain important relationships.

Children benefit from regular, individualised and good-quality key-work sessions. Staff regularly support children with good reflective discussions about their needs and daily lives. This has helped children to feel valued and to recognise the progress they are making. However, staff do not always keep good records of all the actions that they take to improve the day-to-day lives of children.

Children spoken to say they feel listened to and have trusted adults that they can share 'any grumbles with'. Children say they enjoy living in the home. However, there have been long delays in getting children adequate storage in their bedrooms. Leaders and managers have plans in place to address this.

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

Staff receive training on the home's safeguarding policies for whistleblowing. However, one staff member did not demonstrate a good understanding of the home's child protection and whistle-blowing policies. This does not help to keep children safe.

Staff have undertaken online training on first aid and on the home's safeguarding policies for responding to accidents. However, one child experienced a significant delay in receiving medical care for a scald. Staff did not follow the home's procedures for responding to significant incidents. This has meant that there was a delay in the child receiving the help they needed.

Managers conduct most safe recruitment checks when assessing staff suitability to work with children. This includes managers exploring gaps in employment history. However, staff recruitment records sampled do not demonstrate that references for staff who have previously worked with vulnerable adults or children have been verified, or that staff are safe to work at the home.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that the home's annual fire risk assessment is carried out by a competent person who is able to assess the property for fire hazards. As a result, the fire risk assessment is not fit for purpose or up to date and does not help staff to safeguard children in their care. Fire drill records do not include which staff or children have benefited from safe evacuation procedures. However, leaders and managers took swift action to correct this during the inspection.

Staff understand children's individual needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Staff use this informed knowledge to help children to make safe decisions. When children go missing from the home, staff take prompt action. Staff follow children's missing-from-care protocols and work closely with the police. This coordinated approach helps to keep children safe.

Allegations against staff are managed well. The registered manager seeks advice and support as required. This helps keep staff and children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. Since the monitoring visit in February 2021, the manager has focused strongly on improving staff culture. This has included increasing management capacity to create a home's manager post to enhance capacity. The home is staffed by a diverse staff team.

Leaders, managers and staff have worked hard during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that the impact on children's quality of care has been kept to a minimum. Where agency staff were used, leaders and managers explained the impact of this to children. For example, the manager rearranged the staff rota when children tested positive for COVID-19. This helped children to have continuity of care.

Leaders and managers have high aspirations for children. They are working hard to develop and embed a therapeutic ethos in the home. Leaders and managers take learning from external sources and are responsive and committed to developing all areas of the service.

Leaders and managers work very well with other agencies and carers to support the day-to-day care of children. One health care professional said, 'Staff have always communicated effectively, sharing their concerns, identifying risks, and asking other professionals for their thoughts and how best to move forward.'

Staff say that they are very well supported and benefit from regular supervision, induction, team meetings, group supervision, therapeutic support and training. However, staff have not received specialist training that meets the needs of the children living in the home. For example, staff have not received ligature training, and they have relied very heavily on the guidance provided by the national health service call lines. This does not ensure that staff have the skills and training to meet the needs of children in their care.

The statement of purpose for the home has not been updated in line with regulations, and it includes information that is out of date. For example, the statement of purpose states that the home has internal closed circuit television cameras, although leaders and managers say these are no longer in use. There is also an absence of information about the skills and experience of the staff team and the children's commissioner contact details.

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
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home 20 November 2021 the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))	07 February 2022
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in schedule 1. The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (1) (3))	10 March 2022
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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and	10 March 2022

are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that: ■ all staff follow the home's child protection policies in responding to accidents; ■ all staff know what action to take in relation to whistleblowing procedures.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, this refers to ensuring that staff are trained and skilled to meet the needs of each child, for example ligature training.	10 March 2022
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character;	10 March 2022

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))

In particular, this refers to ensuring that references are verified and a record of the verification is kept.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, this refers to ensuring that children's day-to-day experiences of staff interventions are fully captured in the home's records. (Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that children's bedrooms have adequate storage and are nurturing environments for children. (Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 1268886

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Home Ltd

Registered provider address: 3 More London Place, Riverside, London SE1 2RE

Responsible individual: Paul Carr

Registered manager: Jacqueline Coombs

Inspector

Jayshree Pillay, Social Care Inspector

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