

1269505

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home, which provides accommodation, education and therapeutic care for up to four children who may have had traumatic experiences that have left them vulnerable. The new manager was recruited in July 2018. He was registered with Ofsted on 4 January 2019.

Inspection date: 3 January 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 25 September 2018

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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.

Since the last inspection, the manager has addressed all of the requirements and all but one of the recommendations. This recommendation, which relates to the home's environment, is restated.

The usually high quality of the interior of the home's environment has evidence of damage. Pictures have been broken and removed, a window in the porch area is boarded up and there is damage to the upstairs bathroom door. There are no window coverings in the bathroom. The porch window is due to be repaired very soon. However, the level of damage does not demonstrate that the children are consistently supported to take care of their environment.

One child's missing-from-home episodes have increased recently. There are instances

when the children have been able to leave the home by distracting staff or locking internal doors. This does not demonstrate an effective level of supervision when children are at risk of going missing. There is an additional concern that a child has recently used their phone to pass messages to another child, increasing the risk and facilitating incidents of going missing.

There is a lack of available information regarding all of the night-time checks for one child. This means that not all records are clear about when risk-taking behaviours take place. Record logs are now in place for this child for whom there are significant concerns of self-harming behaviours.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate how staff intervened when two children recently left the home together. One child continued to engage in risky behaviours that led to a hospital admission. Staff actions did not sufficiently safeguard a child who is easily influenced by the behaviour of other children at the home.

The staff are working hard to build relationships with the children. Due to the needs and experiences of the children, this is challenging and, at times, tiring for the staff team. The staff are relatively new. Several staff members do not have previous experience of working with children in a residential care environment. The staff are continuing to build on their skills and are supported by the management team and the therapist. One staff member has not yet undertaken important training in managing challenging behaviour. Lack of training does not fully equip the staff with the skills to continue to develop in their role.

All of the children have education plans. Until recently, these plans were progressing well. Some recent incidents have destabilised some children and there are concerns that some of the children are starting to disengage from their education. This is an area that the home and associated professionals continue to work on. One child is attending school and is well motivated. This is positive.

External monitoring is taking place but is not sufficiently robust. The views of parents and social workers are not regularly sought. Lack of consultation means that the views of others involved with the home are not consistently considered.

Fire drills are taking place, but not as regularly as outlined in the home's procedures. There are no clear plans evident for when the children refuse to evacuate. This does not provide sufficient guidance for staff to follow in the event of a fire.

Some records do not show when they are reviewed and completed. Complaints procedures are followed and recorded but timescales are not evident. A therapeutic plan for one child requires updating. The impact of this is minimised by good information sharing within team as the staff know the children well. The manager is aware of gaps in recording and continues to address this.

The same children have remained in placement since the last inspection and there are positive improvements. Children are building relationships with staff and are participating

in several activities. The staff are helping the children to build their self-esteem and social skills. The children said that staff listen to them and that they can talk openly to the staff about their feelings.

The children feel valued and supported. A child said, 'Staff are great, and they really listen. I open up more now. I wouldn't talk to anyone about my feelings or anything before.'

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2018	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.

Requirements	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— help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act on signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and	04/02/2019

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi))	
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— 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)) In particular, ensure that fire drills are undertaken in line with the home's procedures and that plans are in place for children who refuse to evacuate.	04/02/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should provide a nurturing and supportive environment that is homely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, repair the broken window and the bathroom door and ensure that appropriate window coverings are in place to protect privacy.

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role that they play in the training and development of staff at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 1269505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Benjamin UK Limited

Registered provider address: Church Farm House, Station Road, Aldbury, Tring HP23 5RS

Responsible individual: Claudette Deysel

Registered manager: Lee Sharp

Inspector

Debbie Young: social care inspector

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