

1271998

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number of homes operated by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties and who may have learning difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2023.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 May 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2022	Full	Good
19/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/10/2021	Full	Inadequate
15/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

There are two children living in the home, and three children have moved out since the last inspection. Inspectors identified significant and widespread concerns in safeguarding practice and management oversight of the home. The staff team is inexperienced, and staff have not all completed relevant or suitable training to meet children's individual needs. This means that children's experiences, quality of care, safety and protection are compromised.

Transitions in and out of the home are not evaluated effectively. Leaders and managers do not consider how staff will manage children's individual risks. Transition plans do not consider children's specific needs or the impact on children already in the home. The manager has not identified strategies to alleviate risk before children are placed together. Children do not always experience positive endings to their care.

The home is spacious and has appropriate outdoor space for children to play. However, the home needs extensive repair and redecoration. The home would benefit from having a general clean. Children have personalised bedrooms to suit their individual tastes. However, bedrooms contain damaged furniture and have some window dressings missing. One child told inspectors, 'I'm not bothered about the blinds because you can't see in anyway because of the dirt.'

Children say that they understand how to make a complaint. However, records are confusing and are not child-focused. One complaint viewed by inspectors used terminology that assigned blame to the child. Children are not helped to understand the outcome of their complaint and any actions taken.

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

Managers and staff demonstrate a lack of understanding about their own roles and responsibilities in protecting children. They have not taken appropriate action when there have been serious concerns about children's safety and welfare. Risk management plans are conflicting and do not include a clear rationale for decision-making.

There is a poor response to children going missing from home. Not all staff understand the risks for children and are unclear of actions to take to minimise the risk of harm. Strategies identified are inconsistent and contradictory. Furthermore, children do not benefit from independent return home interviews. Leaders and managers have not taken appropriate steps to ensure these are arranged.

Managers have failed to respond safely to allegations and have not taken appropriate action to reduce the risk of harm. There has been a significant number

of allegations from children about staff. This includes an allegation against a member of staff who remained working in the home. Action was only taken when inspectors identified the concerns. Allegation records do not demonstrate that children are supported through the process or informed of the outcome.

Physical interventions have been deployed when deemed necessary and proportionate. However, intervention records demonstrate that these have not been completed and recorded in line with the home's policy and procedures. There are conflicting and inaccurate records. Debriefs are not consistently completed with children. This means that children are not supported to give feedback about the care they are receiving. There is ineffective management oversight and evaluation in relation to restraint practice. This shortfall means that this requirement will be restated.

Children are not supported to keep themselves safe from bullying. Staff have not consistently acted on signs of bullying. There have been several bullying incidents, including a significant physical assault between children that required police involvement. Records of bullying are inconsistent and imprecise. This means that there have been missed opportunities to reflect on practice and develop strategies to minimise further harm and keep children safe.

Room searches have not been conducted or recorded consistently. Records do not demonstrate appropriate evaluation and overview from leaders and managers. Reports contain misleading and unhelpful information. This leaves children vulnerable to harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is inadequate management oversight of the home. Leaders and managers are not sufficiently reviewing and evaluating the quality of care provided. There is no evidence of learning from practice. Leaders and managers are not efficiently using external monitoring systems to improve outcomes for children. Leaders and managers are not effectually responding to actions identified in independent visitor reports.

Leaders and managers have not taken appropriate action to meet the requirements identified at the previous inspection. Consistent action has not been taken to address the shortfalls. The lack of response impacts on the children's experience of the quality of care they receive.

Supervision is taking place regularly and in line with the home's recently amended policy. However, the frequency of supervision is not accurately reflected in the home's statement of purpose. Supervision is not reflective or practice-based. Records highlight that there is no consideration of incidents or learning to support development.

Children's relevant plans do not comprehensively identify children's individual needs. Plans are not consistently updated to reflect the children's journey through the

home. Not all children benefit from up-to-date placing authority plans. Additionally, there has been no request from leaders and managers for these to be provided. There is no evidence that children contribute to their care planning or are involved in making decisions that affect their lives.

Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to address staffing deficits. The home is not adequately staffed and resourced to meet the needs of children living in the home. One member of staff said, 'Low staffing levels along with an unsettled home for a long time has affected staff morale, resilience and energy.'

Training is predominantly completed online and is described by staff as 'ineffective'. Staff are not receiving regular mandatory training or supported to access more focused training to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Compliance notices have been issued under regulation 12, the protection of children standard; regulation 13, the leadership and management standard; and regulation 35, behaviour management policies and records standard.

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; have the skills to identify and act upon 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; 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; and	11 June 2023

that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)(e))	
*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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))	11 June 2023
*The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The registered person must ensure that—	11 June 2023

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii) (b)(i)(ii)(c)) This is a repeated requirement.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—	11 June 2023

mutual respect and trust;

an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and

positive responses to other children and adults.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that staff—

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;

communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;

are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;

de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;

understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and

have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.

(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(x)(xi) (xii)(xiii))

In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that incidents of bullying are recorded, recognised and understood by those caring for children.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if— the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child’s needs; the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission; or that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)(e)(i)(ii)(f)) In particular, children should benefit from planned moves in and out of the home in line with their relevant plans. Children’s records should accurately reflect their journey through the home.	11 June 2023
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child’s needs;	11 June 2023

if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans.

(Regulation 5 (b)(c))

In particular, leaders and managers should effectively challenge placing authorities and take action to escalate concerns if the authority does not arrange independent return home interviews when children have been missing from home.

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 1271998

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Registered provider address: Your Chapter, Hobart House, 3 Oakwater Avenue, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle SK8 3SR

Responsible individual: Tayub Ahmed

Registered manager: Sean Parkin

Inspectors

Nichola Croft, Social Care Inspector
Kayleigh Treanor, Social Care Inspector

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