

1274341

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four children who have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2019.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 22 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/07/2019	Full	Good
05/12/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children have some positive relationships with the adults who care for them. The manager and staff team are proud of the children's achievements and speak warmly about them. However, there is a lack of aspiration for children to reach, and try to exceed, their potential in all aspects of their development.

Many activities are undertaken with children who have the interest and enthusiasm. For those children who struggle to engage in new and varied activities, there is a lack of motivation and support from the staff team. Instead of supporting children with their social and physical development, there is an acceptance by some staff that children playing video games every day is acceptable.

Similarly, in education, opportunities are lacking for children to learn informally and to achieve their educational potential. Two children are in full-time education and another has made great progress with increasing their attendance after home tuition. However, there are no attempts to engage children in homework, and one child is disadvantaged by the staff team not fully supporting attendance with the correct uniform, resulting in the child being sent home and missing time in school. One child is not supported to continue learning in the home, as detailed in their education plan.

The house and garden provide plenty of space for children to be together or spend time alone. The home is a safe environment without hazards, yet it looks tired and in need of lots of redecoration. The maintenance programme is scheduled for this to occur the week after the inspection and children have been consulted about the redecoration of their bedrooms.

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

The registered manager and staff team know the children well and identify potential risks and triggers to their behaviour. Risk assessment documents do not fully reflect the known risks that staff are alert to. On occasions, risks are recorded in the care plans without being transferred into risk management documents.

Incidents requiring physical intervention occur appropriately to prevent children from harming themselves or others. Records confirm that these interventions are for very short periods. Children and staff have the opportunity to discuss the incident afterwards and the manager undertakes some analysis to consider if there are any lessons learned to inform future practice. In recent weeks, physical intervention has been used to redirect children when they are threatening to harm another child. Staff use their distraction skills well when there are difficulties within group living.

The police have been called twice to manage children's behaviour and each time this was considered unnecessary by the manager. Staff failed to follow the on-call process

of seeking management advice before contacting the police. The manager followed this up with staff in supervision. One incident did involve some extensive damage to property and an assault on a staff member. This led to a successful restorative outcome with a written apology and the purchase of some items for the home to replace the damaged ones.

Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding, including the management of self-harm. The manager appropriately refers to the local safeguarding partnership when concerns arise, including any allegations against staff members. There have been no incidents of children going missing from this home

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

Staff members report that they receive good support and advice from the manager with regular team meetings, supervision and training. However, one established team member failed to demonstrate an understanding, or awareness, of the quality standards for children's home. It is not evident from records that there is a widespread understanding of the quality standards by the staff team.

Staffing of this home is being supplemented by agency and bank staff. Since February 2021, the arrangement for the supervision of children overnight has led to a member of staff being awake and available if the children become unsettled. This post is covered by a small number of agency staff, and their regularity provides some continuity of care. The manager has failed to provide supervision for the regular agency staff. This is against the company policy for the support of temporary staff at the home.

The one requirement from the last inspection about the monitoring of care practices has not been met and is repeated from this inspection. The manager has failed to monitor care plans and risk assessments sufficiently. Old or missing information has been identified through this inspection, along with incorrect dates and names of social workers. The manager has not noted or amended these failings through her own monitoring.

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 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; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking into account of the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi)(c)(i))	30 June 2021

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— help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans; support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(viii)(ix)(x))	30 June 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	30 June 2021

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;	30 June 2021

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	30 June 2021

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: 1274341

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Fairfield Lodge, Evenwood Gate, Bishop Auckland
DL14 9NH

Responsible individual: Richard Parker

Registered manager: Kimberley Saunders

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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