

1278421

Registered provider: DMR Services Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to four children aged between 11 and 17 who may have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and complex needs.

The home does not have a registered manager. A new manager has recently been appointed but has not yet applied to Ofsted to be registered.

Inspection date: 11 and 12 October 2022

Date of last inspection: 9 August 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 9 and 10 August 2022, Ofsted undertook a full inspection and judged the home as requires improvement to be good, and inadequate in leadership and management. Ofsted issued a compliance notice under regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- Leaders have not taken sufficient action to meet the compliance notice raised under regulation 13. As a result, this compliance notice is reissued for a third time.
- Leaders have not ensured that steps have been taken to meet the four requirements raised at the last full inspection. These requirements are restated.
- The responsible individual's oversight of the home has been poor. This has contributed to the failure of managers to implement required improvements following the last two full inspections.
- Children's safety is compromised as staff do not consistently follow safeguarding procedures. Specifically, staff did not take appropriate action in response to an allegation.
- Leaders have not undertaken a review of staff skills and knowledge in order to identify required training and development.
- Leaders' monitoring and review systems are not effective. For example, leaders have not ensured that care plans and risk assessments are reviewed and updated.

The care of children

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home, in a planned way. Three children are currently living in the home.

There has been a recent change of manager. The new manager has begun to support staff to provide children with a more consistent quality of care. These improvements are not yet fully embedded and further work is needed to ensure that staff are given clear guidance on how best to meet children's needs. This includes ensuring that there are up-to-date and clear plans setting out how staff can promote children's welfare and help them meet their potential.

Children have made some progress since the last inspection. For one child, this progress has resulted in a reduction in the required levels of supervision from staff. For other children, the progress has meant they have been given more responsibility for using their mobile phones and computers. However, these aspects of progress are not well documented.

The manager has worked hard to develop positive relationships with the children. This has included giving children the opportunity to share their views so that they feel listened to. Children told the inspector they are happier living in the home since the new manager joined the home.

The safety of children

Staff have undertaken training to help them understand and act on potential safeguarding concerns. However, staff did not take appropriate action when a child made an allegation. This had the potential to compromise the child's safety. In response to this shortfall, the new manager has spoken to all staff to advise them of the processes they should follow should there be any further allegations. The actions taken by the manager to address staff's safeguarding practice has not been documented. This is the second time that staff have failed to follow safeguarding protocols when a child has made an allegation. Despite this, there has been no review of how the allegation was managed to identify other learning for staff.

Leaders do not consistently speak to children following safeguarding incidents to understand their views. Furthermore, management oversight of such incidents is poor. However, this is an improving picture since the new manager came into post. In addition, there has been an associated reduction in incidents in the home, such as the frequency of children going missing from the home.

Leaders have not ensured that staff are given clear guidance on how to protect children. For example, risk assessments have not been updated to reflect children's current vulnerabilities.

Staff are generally successful in managing children's behaviour. Physical restraint is rarely used, and staff have only restrained a child once since the last inspection. However, this incident is not well recorded and there is no management oversight of what happened. This is a missed opportunity to identify areas for improvement..

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has left the company. Another manager was appointed but did not take up the position. A new manager has been appointed and has been in post since 7 September 2022. At the time of the inspection being announced, he was unaware that a compliance notice had been issued following the last inspection. This has been a contributing factor in the manager's failure to take action to meet the compliance notice.

The responsible individual does not have good enough oversight of the home. In part, this is because she delegates her role to a director in the company. This hands-off approach has added to the ineffective leadership of the home and has meant that limited progress has been made since the last full inspection.

The home has experienced a period of unstable leadership because of the registered manager leaving. Overall, the new manager's appointment has been positive for the home and there are early indicators of improvements. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the home. He is in the process of implementing monitoring and review systems. However, these systems are not yet embedded or fully effective.

Leaders have not undertaken a review of the staff's skills and knowledge. This means that the staff's training and development needs are not yet fully understood. As a result, staff have not been given the necessary support to consistently meet children's needs. In addition, staff are not always provided with supervision sessions. Some staff have not received a supervision since June 2022. This means that there are limited opportunities for staff to formally reflect on their practice, review their training needs and raise any concerns.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
09/06/2021	Full	Good
11/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that children's risk assessments are up to date and include all known risks. In addition, the registered manager must ensure that staff have the skills to help them to identify and act on risks to children. This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	27 November 2022
*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.	27 November 2022

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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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)(a)(c)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that they have monitoring and reviewing systems in place that identify shortfalls effectively. This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(ii)(d)) This specifically relates to children having up-to-date plans that are reflective of their needs. This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	27 November 2022
A responsible individual must—	27 November 2022

have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home. (Regulation 26 (7)(b)) This specifically relates to the nominated responsible individual having oversight of the home and actively supporting the improvements required.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— 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. This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that debriefs take place with children and are recorded. (Regulation 35 (1)(b) (3)(c)) This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	27 November 2022

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they undertake a review that focuses on the quality of care in the home. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the care provided, which will be captured in the written report. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 15.4, page 65)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1278421

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: DMR Services Limited

Registered provider address: DMR Services, 102 Queslett Road, Streetley, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham B74 2EZ

Responsible individual: Sally Neville

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Compliance Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022