

2483881

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered since October 2020.

Visit dates: 9 to 10 December 2020

Previous inspection date: 18 June 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children have begun to form trusting relationships with staff and managers. There has been a significant change in staffing in recent months. A new permanent staff team is in place and a new manager came into post during the summer.

Children get to keep in touch with family members, friends and others important to them. Staff have supported children to visit people and to keep in regular contact with them. This is positive, given the restrictions and lockdowns that have been in place due to COVID-19.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are known and met. Staff ensure that children receive general and specialist healthcare in a timely manner. The home has access to a therapist who provides counselling and support to children. This promotes the children's emotional health and well-being.

Education or training provision is in place for each child. For those children not engaging in formal education, timetables have been put in place. These reflect the planned activities for children each day.

Children do not routinely read, sign or consider care plans and other records relating to their care. Their contributions to relevant records are not evident. This would provide them with an opportunity to better understand how staff and managers intend to support them. It would enable children to be fully involved in the care and support they receive.

The safety of children

A range of risk assessments are in place for each child. These include specific missing-from-care procedures and protocols. Several have not been reviewed or updated in a timely manner. One missing-from-care procedure did not contain enough detail or information on the child's known associates or places they may go to. This could undermine staff's ability to accurately know how to respond to a child who is at risk.

Incidents of children going missing from care have reduced in recent months. This is due to positive and proactive multi-agency working. A range of professionals meet regularly to consider children most at risk. This team around the child approach is leading to increased safety and a reduction in risks.

There has been no use of physical intervention recently. Staff use de-escalation techniques to help children to manage any risky behaviours. There has been no use of sanctions recently. Staff try and reward children for positive behaviour and support them to consider concerning/risky behaviours.

Staff support children to have clear and consistent boundaries in place. They support children to understand any risks or concerns. Staff carry out direct work with children to help them to understand risks and how to reduce them.

Certain aspects of the home environment require improvement. The kitchen sink area has exposed metal beading where tiles have been damaged. This poses a potential hazard to children and staff. Some bedroom door handles have been repaired but continue to work loose. This could potentially cause children to be trapped in their bedrooms. Paper towels are not provided in the toilets/bathrooms. The current arrangements for handwashing are unhygienic, which poses a potential health risk to children and staff. The manager is aware of these issues, but clear timescales have not been set to resolve them.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager came into post during the summer and registered in October 2020. Several staff left earlier this year and have been replaced. The new staff team presents as being committed to meeting the children's needs.

Records of complaints made by children and others do not reflect the actions taken by the manager, or outcomes. There is a need for more consistent and clear recording of any complaints made. The manager intends to have conversations with children regarding how they can make a complaint and what will happen.

The new staff team has not received specific training in areas such as child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, gangs or county lines. There is also a need to ensure that staff are trained and competent in the use of EpiPens. The staff training matrix identifies several gaps in training for staff. There is a need for the manager to ensure that staff complete necessary training to be able to provide suitable care for children.

Staff have not all received regular supervision. Records do not reflect clearly if supervisions for all staff have taken place. The manager accepts that this needs to be improved and that planned and actual supervision sessions must be accurately recorded.

Where agency staff are used, the manager has not ensured that full information is provided by the agency. This relates to the qualifications, training and experience of agency staff working in the home. There is a need for the manager to see all relevant training certificates and the dates completed. This is to make sure that any staff member working in the home has the necessary skills and experience.

The statement of purpose for the home has not been updated or provided to Ofsted since June 2020. It does not reflect the new manager or staff member changes this year. Ofsted requires this information so that there is oversight of the home and how it operates.

The manager has failed to formally notify Ofsted of all allegations of abuse made against people working in the home. Some notifications have been sent to Ofsted, but not all. This prevents Ofsted from being able to have clear oversight of all

regulatory issues in the home. The manager has agreed to provide retrospective notifications to Ofsted following this visit.

The requirement and recommendation set at the last inspection have been met.

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 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 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)(g)) This particularly relates to supporting children to read, sign and comment on relevant care plans and records.	29 January 2021
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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This relates to ensuring that prompt repairs are completed for bedroom door handles and damage to the kitchen tiling and that paper towels are provided in all toilets within the home.	29 January 2021

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))	29 January 2021
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	29 January 2021
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 has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(b)) This particularly refers to the need for the provider to ensure that full information is obtained and considered about the training, qualifications and experience of agency staff.	29 January 2021
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify Ofsted of any revisions and send Ofsted a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	29 January 2021
The registered person must notify Ofsted and each other relevant person without delay if—	29 January 2021

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2483881

Registered provider: Ivie Lodge Limited

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, 9 Portland Street, Manchester M1 3BE

Responsible individual: Lorraine Miranda

Registered manager: Lorraine Munro

Inspector

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector

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