

2484443

Registered provider: Impact For Change Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home offers medium- or long-term placements.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2020. However, the manager has resigned from the post and during the inspection was working his notice period. Three children are currently living in the home.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspection on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 9 and 10 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

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/or widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded

Date of last inspection: 14 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/02/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The care that children receive is inadequate and, consequently, their experiences are poor. Neither the registered manager nor staff have a sufficient understanding of safeguarding. As a result, children have not been sufficiently protected. Concerns about a child at risk of harm and exploitation are not always recognised by staff. Another child has repeatedly told staff he does not feel safe. Staff have not taken his concerns seriously or acted on them to help him to feel safe.

Frequent changes in the staff team are having a negative impact on children's ability to build trusting relationships with staff. Children told the inspector that this worries them. Although COVID-19 has presented challenges for children and staff alike, there has also been an increase in staff choosing to leave the home. This increase in staff departures has had a greater impact on instability of staffing in the home.

Staff interactions with children are sometimes poor. For example, one child told the inspector that staff frequently mock him. He said staff tell him to 'man up' when he is distressed and does not feel safe. Two children told the inspector that they do not feel listened to, and that their concerns are not taken seriously. Complaints made by children are not resolved swiftly and, on occasions, not at all. A senior leader acted during the inspection to support the children in relation to these specific complaints. During the inspection, some staff prioritised the completion of paperwork over spending time with children and providing them with good-quality care. This lack of engagement means that children do not have confidence that the staff care for them and will prioritise their welfare.

Most areas of the home are well maintained and welcoming. However, staff have failed to provide one child with the necessary support to keep his bedroom clean. This child's room is unkempt and dirty.

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

Children do not always feel safe living in this home. This is because staff and the registered manager fail to recognise and take appropriate action in response to safeguarding concerns. Child protection processes are not followed consistently.

Managers and staff do not recognise all signs that children may be at risk of harm and exploitation. Incidents of children going missing from the home have increased, and children have not been consistently protected from exposure to the risks of drug and alcohol misuse. On their return to the home, children are not routinely asked about their experiences when they have been missing. Staff have not found creative ways to help children to engage with external substance misuse and exploitation support agencies. This means that opportunities to explore the risks with children and find ways to keep them safe are missed.

On occasions, some staff's responses to children telling them they feel unhappy are flippant and even offensive. A child's concerns about feeling unsafe were dismissed on several occasions, and a disclosure about peer-on-peer abuse was not referred to external agencies as it should have been.

Safeguarding records are consistently inadequate. Safeguarding concerns and other incidents are not recorded effectively and fail to contain all the required information. Actions taken in response to these concerns are not always recorded and therefore cannot be confirmed. Leaders and managers do not maintain a system to enable them to track and monitor safeguarding concerns. As a result, they do not have an accurate understanding of trends and patterns. This limits their ability to respond to safeguarding concerns effectively and to actively promote children's welfare.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leadership and management of this home is poor. The registered manager is not meeting the conditions of his registration because his oversight of the quality of care that children receive and the operation of the home is ineffective.

Staff are not provided with the support and training they need to fulfil their role in protecting and meeting the individual needs of children. Not all staff have completed the required mandatory safeguarding training. For example, some staff have not completed training in supporting children who misuse drugs, children at risk of exploitation, restraint, first aid and managing concerns about self-harm/suicide. Consequently, children are being cared for by some staff who do not have the skills and knowledge to safeguard them.

Leaders have not ensured that the registered manager and staff team have sufficient formal supervision. Opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice to improve the quality of care are missed.

Leaders and managers do not have robust oversight of the day-to-day running of this home. Independent and internal monitoring is ineffective. The lack of effective oversight and challenge by leaders and managers results in a poorly run home with systems and practices that do not ensure or promote children's welfare.

As a result of this inspection, Ofsted has issued two compliance notices requiring leaders and managers to take urgent action to protect children and operate the home effectively. Leaders have told the regulator that they intend closing the home temporarily to enable them to rectify the poor safeguarding practices found at this inspection. Ofsted will continue to monitor this home.

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; treat each child with dignity and respect; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; 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)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(c)(i))	25 February 2022

In addition, ensure that children are provided with continuity of care from adults who have the training, skills and experience to meet their needs. In addition, leaders and managers should ensure that all children are supported to maintain a clean and hygienic bedroom.	
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, ensure that children are provided with support from external agencies that will reduce the risk of exploitation and drug misuse.	25 February 2022
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 upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. *(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))	11 February 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 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 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	11 February 2022
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))	25 February 2022

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2484443

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Impact For Change Ltd

Registered provider address: Canns Down Press, Beaford, Winkleigh, Devon
EX19 8LZ

Responsible individual: Mark Parker

Registered manager: Russell Chapman

Inspector

Sharron Escott, Social Care Inspector

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