

2490938

Registered provider: London Borough of Hillingdon

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and run by the local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five young people. The home's statement of purpose states that it looks after young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home and registered manager were registered by Ofsted in August 2018. The home was previously located elsewhere in the same borough under a different name before it was relocated.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 December 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

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.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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
Medicines The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))	01/03/2019
Notification of a serious event The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (3)(a)(e))	01/03/2019
Behaviour management policies and records 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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)) In particular, staff must be provided with clear guidance concerning room searches and how these are recorded.	01/03/2019
The education standard 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	01/03/2019

appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8(2)(a)(i)(ii)(v))

This is with reference to ensuring that the home offers young people constructive and educational activities when they are not in school or receiving tuition at home.

Recommendations

- Ensure that contingency plans are prepared in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels. If it is likely that there might only be one member of staff on duty at any time the manager should make a formal assessment of the implications for children's care, including any likely risks. The assessment should be recorded and available for inspection by Ofsted and placing authorities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.18)
- Ensure that no more than half the staff on duty at any one time, by day or night at the home, should be from an external agency. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.17)
- Ensure that when a restraint occurs young people are given the opportunity to express their feelings about the experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)
- Staff should take account of information provided by return home interviews following episodes when a child has been missing. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that the registered person oversees the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)
- Ensure that the registered person and staff work closely with the placing authority so that a young person is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. The focus should be on the provision of support to sustain or regain confidence in education and engagement in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.5)
- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of turnover of staff, whether agency or directly employed, and be able to understand and, where possible, address any trends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)

- Ensure a continuity of staffing to ensure that young people's attachments are not overly disrupted. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Inspection judgements

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

The use of agency staff is excessive and limits the quality of care in the home. While working with agency staff, permanent staff are unable to leave the home. This limits the choice of evening activities for young people. During this inspection, one young person was late for school because of staffing levels.

The educational progress made by young people is variable. Some young people spend long periods of time in their rooms. Furthermore, young people have access to the internet and televisions throughout the school day. There was no evidence of daily planners to engage young people, or any constructive activity being proposed by staff. More positively, one young person received an award from the local authority for her attendance and progress.

Young people respect their new home. They value their relationship with staff and the positive impact this has had on their behaviour. One young person commented, 'It's really cool here. I have my own telly and shower in my room. I feel more chilled out now.'

Behaviour management is good. When incidents occur, staff give young people the opportunity to think through their behaviours and, where appropriate, allow young people to apologise. Allocated social workers support this approach and commented on the young people's improved behaviours.

Effective work with parents supports behaviour management. Parents reported that they had regular contact with key workers. Parents said that they support staff by stressing the importance to their children of attending school and complying with staff directions.

Young people develop their relationships with parents and extended family. Several young people have enjoyed approved overnight stays with their relatives. This promotes placement stability and allows young people to feel heard.

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

Low staffing levels pose a potential risk. During the inspection, one female member of staff was working alone with three young people without a risk assessment. One of the

young people concerned has a history of assaulting female members of staff.

Medication procedures are not safe. The present system does not allow staff to monitor the levels of controlled drugs effectively. This may create difficulties in auditing and poses a possible risk to young people.

Multi-agency safeguarding is effective. Staff work in close partnership with key professionals such as therapists to support young people. Concerns are quickly shared via the council's computer information system.

Risk assessments offer staff a clear picture of the needs of young people and how these should be met. Young people displayed a good knowledge of their own assessments, with records confirming when young people had provided feedback on the plans that are in place.

Staff enjoy good levels of training. Staff are keenly aware of key areas of risk such as child sexual exploitation. Staff link this to the possible risk posed to young people in the community.

Staff advocate for young people effectively. Following a review of prescribed medication requested by staff, one young person was able to improve his engagement with his daily tuition.

The response to missing behaviour lacks robustness. There is no system in place for monitoring the frequency that young people go missing from the home or for considering any concerns that arise from independent return home interviews.

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

The registered manager was absent from the home during the inspection, due to sickness. The deputy manager was present throughout. Regretfully, the registered manager's absence limited the scope of this inspection as key records such as staff supervision, performance appraisal and performance data were not accessible.

The staff recruitment strategy is poor. Four permanent members of staff have left the home without being replaced. There has been no recruitment of permanent staff for two and a half years. Excessive agency staff use occurs at vulnerable times of the day, such as during the waking night shift.

Admission procedures do not always fully take account of how the needs of young people will be met once they arrive. In particular, despite managers having two months' notice of the date of one young person's arrival, they did not ensure that sufficient staffing or a programme of education were in place to meet his needs effectively.

Other admissions to the home have gone well. Managers consider the needs of those already resident in the house to ensure that young people settle quickly and make

progress.

Key documentation requires updating. The behaviour policy fails to offer staff guidance on the recording and evaluation of room searches. In addition, the recording of physical intervention does not allow for the wishes and feelings of young people to be recorded.

Managers do not report incidents as required. The home failed to notify Ofsted of a serious incident that had occurred recently. This shortfall limits Ofsted's ability to monitor the home effectively.

The most recent management monitoring report does not fully represent the feedback of young people. This limits the effectiveness of the review.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 2490938

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: London Borough of Hillingdon

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1UW

Responsible individual: Tony Zaman

Registered manager: Lee Carrie

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

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