

2490938

London Borough of Hillingdon

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

- The local authority owns and runs this home for up to five children.
- In the home's statement of purpose, the provider states that it cares for children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- The registered manager was in post from October 2017. He has since left the home but has not yet resigned his registration with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 6 June 2019

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged declined in effectiveness at the interim inspection on 12 March 2019.

The registered managers of two other local authority homes have co-managed the service to provide effective leadership during the registered manager's absence.

The home has experienced some positive changes since the last inspection. Managers have met five of the six requirements and three of the five recommendations made at the last inspection.

Most significantly, the staff team has stabilised. Experienced staff have joined from other homes, most of the staff who were on sick leave have returned and there is ongoing recruitment. As a result, children benefit from being cared for by consistent staff who are starting to work more effectively as a team.

Staff said morale is improving and noted that they better understand what is expected of them. Staff now benefit from planned supervision, furthermore, they said that they can approach the acting managers at any time and be sure of a response.

A new independent visitor has greatly improved how the home is checked. The

visitor provides Ofsted with reports of her visits each month. She focuses on children's safety and well-being and has been instrumental in highlighting any issues. Her role as a 'critical friend' has helped the home's development.

Restraint is rarely used in the home. However, if such incidents do occur, any staff involved in restraining a child are no longer involved in the child's debrief. This improves children's safety.

Managers now notify Ofsted of any significant event, providing effective information sharing.

The living environment has improved. Repairs have been carried out so that the building provides a more comfortable home for children. However, the garden is overgrown and not attractive for children to use.

Steps have been taken to encourage children's engagement in education. For example, television sets are gradually being removed from children's bedrooms. Despite this, educational outcomes and experiences are poor.

Children who are out of full-time education are not engaged in learning during the school day. Some children have gone missing at night, then slept during the day, not engaging in their education. This affects their progress and attendance.

The response to children going missing requires improvement. The police stated that they have no concerns about how staff report children who go missing from the home. However, in the last five months there has been an increase in the number of episodes when children go missing, which raises associated risks such as child sexual exploitation, gangs and criminal involvement.

Despite staff requests, information gained from independent return home interviews is not readily shared with them to improve children's safety.

The matching of new children to the existing residents has not always been successful. For example, one child influenced the decline of another child's progress and engagement in education, and a decline in their safety.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/12/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 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; 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; and	31/08/2019

that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)) Specifically, reduce the recent increase in children going missing.	31/08/2019

Recommendations

- 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 and staff work closely with the placing authority so that the child 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)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Specifically, ensure that the garden is maintained to provide a safe and attractive place for children to enjoy.

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Jacqueline Graves, social care regulatory inspector

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