

2490938

Registered provider: London Borough of Hillingdon

Interim 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. The home's statement of purpose states that the home provides care and accommodation for up to five children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home and manager were registered by Ofsted in August 2018. The home was previously located elsewhere in the borough under a different name. The home became operational on 30 August 2018. The registered manager has been in post since October 2017.

Inspection date: 12 March 2019

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 3 December 2018

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Four requirements and eight recommendations were made at the last inspection. The home has addressed one requirement and three of the recommendations. Additional concerns have arisen in relation to the home environment, provision of independent person's reports and staff supervision. The remaining requirements and recommendations are therefore repeated.

The registered manager has been absent from the home since the last inspection. The deputy manager was also absent between December 2018 and February 2019. Managers from the other residential provisions managed by the borough have attempted to support staff in the home. Staff reported that this has resulted in a degree of uncertainty within the staff team.

Staff morale is low. Four permanent members of staff were on sick leave at the time of this inspection. Managers have employed staff from other homes within the borough to limit the use of agency staff and the impact on young people.

Independent monitoring is poor. Ofsted has not received a monthly report since October 2018. When reports are received they fail to fully evaluate safeguarding in the home. This is of concern given the instability in the home and the concerns expressed during the last inspection.

The home has failed to notify Ofsted consistently of significant events. For example, managers failed to inform Ofsted when a vulnerable young person was missing for four days.

Staff supervision is poor. One staff member has received just one formal supervision session, despite being employed full time in the home since December 2018.

The home struggles to recruit staff. There are four vacancies for permanent staff. No new permanently employed members of staff have been recruited since the last inspection.

The home environment has deteriorated, with unrepaired damage to both living rooms on the ground floor of the home. In addition, metal fittings on the stairwell are loose, presenting a possible hazard to staff and young people.

Medication is now dispensed more safely. Staff have introduced a new recording mechanism to monitor and keep track of levels of prescribed medication.

Progress on supporting young people in education is mixed. Staff have worked hard to support young people to attend by liaising with birth parents and limiting internet access during school hours. Less positively, young people continue to have access to televisions in their bedrooms when they have refused to attend school.

Behaviour management is not safe. Following a recent restraint, the member of staff involved offered a young person a debrief. This limited an independent overview of the incident and the scope for the young person to express their wishes and feelings openly.

The process of staff conducting room searches of young people's bedrooms remains a concern. The home does not benefit from an accessible recording mechanism for room searches, limiting formal monitoring of an important area of practice.

The response to episodes of young people going requires improvement. There is no

system in place to monitor the regularity of independent return to care interviews or analyse any information or concerns gained from them.

It is not possible to assess the engagement of managers with young people. A further management monitoring report is due in May 2019.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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
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))	15/05/2019
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, the need for staff to have clear guidance concerning recording room searches and engaging young people who are not in school during the day.	15/05/2019
The education standard	15/05/2019

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; 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 activity when they are not in school or receiving tuition at home.	
Independent person: visits and reports The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home’s records (except for a child’s case records, unless the child and the child’s placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. The independent person must produce a report about a visit (“the independent person’s report”) which sets out, in particular, the independent person’s opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children’s well-being.	15/05/2019

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5)) In particular, to ensure that reports are received regularly and fully evaluate the safeguarding of young people.	
The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered provider must ensure— that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (2)(b)(vii)) In particular, that the provider ensures that the hazards are removed from the main stairway and the damage to both living rooms is repaired.	12/04/2019
Employment of staff 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)(b))	15/05/2019

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 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 the 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)

- 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 10.10)
- Ensure that when a restraint occurs that young people be 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)

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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