

2491062

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children who present with challenging and complex behaviours. The manager was registered with Ofsted in January 2020.

Visit dates: 10 to 11 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 11 March 2020

Previous inspection judgement: Improved effectiveness

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

The staff and children have worked together to build structure into the day. The children said that the staff have taken part in lots of activities with them and that they have spent good-quality time with the staff.

During the inspection, the inspector observed lovely interactions between the staff and the children. This shows that the children have safe, trusting relationships with the staff.

One child moved into the home prior to the school summer holidays. She has been fully involved in looking at schools for September 2020. The staff have set up an education timetable for her in the meantime. Another child has been engaging with a combination of school and home education. This child said that she is pleased to be back at school.

The children, when appropriate, have kept in touch with their families. This has helped the children to maintain positive relationships with people who are important to them.

The staff have been proactive in helping the children to understand COVID-19 and the impact that this has had on them. The children have made posters for the house to remind staff and visitors to observe government guidelines.

The safety of children

The staff have been proactive to ensure that the children understand the risks posed by the pandemic. The children said that this has made them feel safe because they have a better understanding of COVID-19.

The staff continue to safeguard the children. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and incorporate consideration of COVID-19. A specific risk assessment for the home has been implemented and regularly updated.

Professionals said that the children are safe because staff understand the potential risks for children and manage these well.

The children said that staff listen to them if they have a complaint. The children attend regular house meetings to discuss things that are worrying or concerning them.

The manager thoroughly investigated a concern about a member of staff. However, she did not inform the social worker, designated officer or responsible individual before starting the investigation. This is not in line with safeguarding processes.

Leaders and managers

A consistent staff team has been in place during the pandemic. This has ensured that positive, safe relationships with the children have been maintained.

Comprehensive monitoring of the home is in place. The staff receive regular, good-quality supervision that supports them to work with children effectively and to develop their practice.

The staff have undertaken the organisation's mandatory training and some face-to-face training has begun. However, the manager is the only member of staff who has a relevant level 3 qualification. This means that the staff do not have the relevant qualifications to work at the children's home. The manager and responsible individual are in the process of recruiting staff who hold the relevant qualifications.

The requirement from the last inspection has been repeated and another made.

The manager has met both previous recommendations.

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 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— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(vii))	25/09/2020
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 aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	12/11/2020

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(e))

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2491062

Registered provider: Cornerways Care Limited

Registered provider address: Eastway Enterprise Centre, 7 Paynes Park, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1EH

Responsible individual: Baljinder Haer

Registered manager: Natalie Phelan

Inspector

Trish Palmer, Social Care Inspector

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