

2495967

Registered provider: Harmony Childcare Residential Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with a variety of complex needs. A private provider operates the home. The registered manager is suitably experienced and is undertaking a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 July 2019

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 widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected and/or their welfare is not promoted and/or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: N/A This is the first inspection since this home was registered in April 2019.

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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11 (a)(b)(c))	31/08/2019
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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(v))	31/08/2019
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— 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 work as a team where appropriate; and ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c))*	06/08/2019

After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))	06/08/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))*	06/08/2019
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; and provide each employee with a job description outlining the employee's responsibilities. The registered person must operate a disciplinary procedure which, in particular— provides for the suspension from work of an employee if necessary in the interests of the safety or welfare of children. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(c)(2)(a))*	06/08/2019

Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1)(a)(b)(c) Schedule 4 (5))	31/08/2019
---	------------

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Young people do not receive care from staff who prioritise their needs. Infighting between adults working at the home means that they are not child-focused and do not provide young people with safe and consistent care. Staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities when caring for young people and this has an adverse effect on their experiences.

On at least one occasion, a child heard staff shouting at each other. Conflict between directors, managers and the staff group is tangible. This poor practice does not provide young people with a calm and stable environment. In addition, managers and staff do not role model positive relationships to young people. This does not help young people to learn about treating people with respect and giving positive responses to other people.

When the registered manager and responsible individual request that staff improve their practice, staff often challenge them and do not follow instruction well. For example, when managers tried to implement guidance for managing the supervision of young people, staff opposed this because they did not agree that this was necessary. Consequently, staff do not work in partnership with the manager and the responsible individual and seek to undermine them. Directors of the organisation do not adequately support leaders and managers when this happens. This lack of team work compromises young people's welfare and places them at potential risk of harm.

Despite the shortfalls outlined above, young people do make some progress from their starting points. For example, young people who have been out of a learning environment for some time are helped by staff to improve their education. The manager has worked well with the virtual headteacher to ensure that the appropriate education environment is provided for young people. For example, one young person now engages with a tutor who provides a structured timetable. This gradual introduction back into education helps young people to improve their learning.

Staff support young people to keep in touch with their families. Young people benefit

from regular unsupervised contact with some family members. As a result, young people continue to form important bonds with people who are important to them.

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

Staff do not always supervise young people in line with the guidance set out in their placement plan. This has the potential to place young people at risk of harm.

Not all staff are safely recruited. For example, managers do not verify all written references and explore gaps in employment histories. Records relating to one staff member indicate that they have a level 3 diploma. However, this is not true. Furthermore, a director who regularly attends the home and takes an active role in the day-to-day management of the service has not undergone all safer recruitment checks, including a criminal record check. Poor recruitment practice does not prevent unsafe adults from caring for young people.

Staff do not undertake fire safety monitoring in line with the company's policy and procedures. For example, they do not routinely check fire safety equipment and participate in regular fire drills. This lack of consistent monitoring by staff compromises the safety of everyone living at the home, working at the home and visiting the home.

The registered manager ensures that sanctions are fair and proportionate. This helps young people to understand the impact of negative behaviour on themselves and others. However, on one occasion, a director asked the registered manager to delay a young person's visit to her family until the young person had tidied her bedroom. The registered manager recognised that this is not a permissible sanction and did not implement it.

Young people do not go missing from care or display challenging behaviours that require staff to use physical intervention to keep young people safe from harm. Staff offer praise and rewards to young people to acknowledge their positive achievements. As a result, young people develop some socially acceptable behaviour that helps them to stay safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home was registered in April 2019. The registered manager is undertaking a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Poor leadership means that the home does not operate in line with the aims and objectives set out in its statement of purpose. For example, staff do not have 'a strong staff value base' or 'ensure a clear approach that will help to bring the staff team together in terms of encouraging consistency... [and] providing coherent and reassuring experiences for young people'.

The staff training matrix is not clear and accurate. As a result, it is unclear what training staff have undertaken to develop their skills and knowledge. This leaves young people in the care of staff who may not be suitably skilled or qualified to appropriately support

young people.

Conflict between the directors, managers and staff group results in a lack of meaningful discussion and agreement about practice. As a result, managers and staff do not provide young people with good care that promotes their welfare and safety.

Investigations have taken place into concerns about staff not supervising young people appropriately. These investigations identified that staff were not open and transparent about their actions. This brings into question their honesty, integrity and good character. However, it is not clear what, if any, further action was taken, including consideration of whether any disciplinary action was necessary. As a result, it is not clear how staff are held to account for conduct that falls short of expected standards.

Records show that three new staff had their induction signed off before their employment start date. This presents a confusing picture as to what, if any, induction activities staff have completed. Staff do not receive fortnightly supervision in line with the company's policy. This failure to undertake a thorough induction of new staff, and to provide adequate supervision, does not support staff and provide them with opportunities to learn their roles and to reflect on their practice. In turn, staff are not knowledgeable enough about their roles and responsibilities to provide good care to young people.

Staff do not routinely monitor visitors to the home. This lack of monitoring by staff means that young people are not protected from unsuitable visitors having access to them.

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: 2495967

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Harmony Childcare Residential Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 9 Elstree Close, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 9QF

Responsible individual: Kay Didcote

Registered manager: Sarah Brewer

Inspectors

Michelle Spruce: social care inspector

Dave Carrigan: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019