

2500668

Registered provider: Idem Living Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have learning disabilities.

There is no registered manager at this home.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 March 2019

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.

Date of last inspection: First inspection after registration.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A	N/A	N/A

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— 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii)) This is specifically in relation to having robust procedures for investigating safeguarding concerns and ensuring that any actions identified from investigations are completed and recorded.	26/04/2019
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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the safer area report is used in conjunction with a young person's impact risk assessment to ensure the area is safe for them.	26/04/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are	26/04/2019

protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b)) In particular, ensure that the young people's information in their risk assessments is in order and that staff have clear guidance on the action to take in the event of an incident.	
The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35(2)(3)(a)(iii)(iv))	26/04/2019
A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40(5)(a)(i)(iii)) This is specifically in relation to sending safeguarding notifications promptly only sending notifications that are considered as a serious concern and updating previous safeguarding notifications to demonstrate what actions the home has taken to safeguard young people.	26/04/2019
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home.	26/04/2019

(Regulation 27(1)(a))	
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—	26/04/2019
provide adequate means of escape from the home in the event of fire. (Regulation 25(1)(b))	

Recommendations

- Ensure that records kept in the children's home are signed and dated by the author. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Inspection judgements

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

A young person who was living in another home run by the company was identified as needing individual care. As a result, this home was registered in October 2018. There was a long transition that included the young person visiting the home and staff working with him in school and at his present home. However, his moving date was moved forward due to his and other young people's needs.

The manager ensured that she had all the necessary documents to care for the young person. An impact risk assessment was completed, but she did not use the safer area report to ensure that the home was a safe location for the young person.

The young person has complex needs and very limited verbal communication. Initially, the staff struggled to understand him and his needs. This was compounded by the registered manager being off work on sick leave and then subsequently resigning. Some staff also left at this time. The company brought in two managers from other services to oversee the home and recruited new staff. Both acting managers have extensive knowledge of autism spectrum disorder and related health conditions. They have completed training sessions with staff, worked shifts alongside staff and supported the staff team. As a result, since January 2019 the young person has settled, and staff understand his anxieties and respond appropriately.

At the same time of his admission to the home, the young person moved to a secondary school. The teachers struggled with the young person's behaviour and anxieties. The acting managers called a disruption meeting and involved the young person's psychiatrist and mental health counsellor. They have worked closely together in formulating plans and strategies to care for the young person in the home and while at school. As a result, there is clear communication between both settings and the young person's incidents have significantly reduced. This is evident in the pleasing improved grades that he has recently received.

There are detailed plans around the young person's healthcare needs. He receives extra support from a range of healthcare professionals. The young person requires some blood tests, but he is very anxious about this. The staff are working closely with a nurse who is visiting the home to seek to relieve his anxieties around this. Generally, medication procedures are good, and the young person receives his medication in line with his prescription. However, there was one occasion when a tube of medicated cream was left out. The young person got hold of this and bit into it. Staff took appropriate action and sought medical advice. An internal investigation took place. Several actions were noted, such as speaking to the members of staff involved during their supervision sessions, and checking their understanding of medication procedures. However, only one member of staff was actually spoken to. This does not ensure that the skills, knowledge and competencies of the staff are checked and whether any additional training maybe required in this area.

The young person enjoys a wide range of activities and experiences. These include going on walks, swimming, trampolining and visits to the park. The staff ensure that the young person's sensory needs are considered. He has a playroom with a ball pit and a tent for when he wants some quiet time. He enjoys painting and he proudly displays his artwork in the home.

The young person sees his mother and sister regularly. The details of these arrangements are highlighted in the young person's placement plan. This means that staff can prepare the young person well for these visits, which helps to ensure that these occasions are a positive experience for all.

The young person lives in a large home that provides plenty of space. Staff carry out regular health and safety checks around the home and the young person and staff members frequently practise how to leave the home safely in case of a fire. However, on one occasion the young person left the premises via the back gate. The acting manager put a padlock on the gate until a touchpad system could be installed. The key was in the main office. Therefore, if there had been a fire at the front of the home the only exit would have been through the back gate. The touchpad has now been installed, but for a period the interim security arrangements put the young person and staff at risk.

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

Safeguarding procedures within the home need improving. Managers and staff are aware of what safeguarding concerns to report and who to report them to, but there have been inconsistencies in internal investigations and in following up any actions identified from these, for example checking a member of staff's knowledge and skills after a medication error. On one occasion, an incident was reported to the local authority safeguarding professional and then the responsible individual decided that he would do an internal investigation instead of following the safeguarding procedures through. The local authority safeguarding professional said that generally the home has been

responsive and that the managers have a good grip of the process. However, there has been some confusion with thresholds and miscommunication between both parties. He is attending a meeting at the home to share processes.

Similarly, when safeguarding concerns have arisen the home has notified all the relevant parties, including Ofsted. However, some notifications have been sent late and some have not been updated with an outcome. In addition to this, staff have been sending safeguarding notifications for events that are not considered serious, for example when the young person has been held for his safety. The responsible individual said that he is aware of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and the supporting guidance, but that there has been some confusion and anxiety around this.

The young person has been held for his safety. There are detailed records of the events and the reasons for the interventions. However, the record does not include the location where the hold took place and staff record the name of the hold used, such as supported standing, rather than giving a description of the hold used. Therefore, it is difficult to see which staff members performed each part of the move, and their proximity to the young person, for example who was holding the young person's right or left side. This means that the manager may not be able to effectively evaluate an incident if any concerns are raised regarding excessive force. In contrast to this, the acting managers and staff have worked endlessly to get to know the young person's anxieties and triggers. They have worked closely with other professionals to identify strategies for managing his behaviour. Staff work consistently to provide a safe environment and to respond to the young person in the same way. As a result, the need to hold the young person has significantly reduced. Teachers at the school are also following the same strategies and they have reported a decrease in incidents in school.

There are numerous risk assessments and additional information about the young person's vulnerabilities and needs. The information is not clear because of the volume of information on the young person's file. The risk assessments cover numerous risks within one heading, for example verbal aggression towards others incorporates physical aggression and risks to children and animals. The assessment also covers risks not associated with the young person, such as sexual offending. Further to this, the risk assessments use words, such as 'antecedents', and 'reactive and proactive responses'. When the inspector spoke to a member of staff, the staff member did not know what these words meant. This does not ensure that staff fully understand the risks to the young person, themselves or the public, and does not ensure that they have information readily available to them.

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

There was a registered manager at the home when the home opened in October 2018. She resigned at the end of January 2019. The company took swift action to recruit another manager. However, the identified person declined the position. The company is now recruiting again. They have been successful in recruiting a deputy manager and she will be taking up her position next week. In the interim, two experienced and qualified

managers from other children's homes within the company are overseeing the home. They are completing shifts and supporting the staff team in all areas of their practice. Since the two acting managers began overseeing the home staff morale has improved, and the young person has been making steady progress.

The young person's social worker said that prior to Christmas she was unaware that the young person's placement was near to breaking down. The social worker said that since Christmas, and with the input from the two acting managers, there has been a startling improvement. She continued to say that the acting managers had taken decisive action in calling disruption meetings, liaising with school and getting the young person additional support through the child and adolescent mental health team. She said that the home had gone through a big journey and that communication had greatly improved.

There are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the young person. The acting managers identified that more support was required at weekends so that the young person could engage in activities. To facilitate this, they are currently using agency staff. The acting managers are ensuring that the same agency staff are being used, to provide consistency of care while a recruitment drive identifies more staff.

Staff said that team meetings have significantly improved. The acting managers make sure that research and practice issues, as well as the care provided for the young person, are discussed. The staff have recently refreshed their knowledge of attachment and trauma and how these impact on the young person. As a result, the staff confidently discussed with the inspector the importance of focusing not just on the young person's autism spectrum disorder, but also on the underlying issues that every child has when they are away from their parents or are in care.

The acting managers work collaboratively with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in the young person's care, to secure good outcomes for him. Professionals recognise that the late part of last year was a difficult time for everybody, but they were all positive about the improvements made this year, which have resulted in the improving behaviour of the young person.

Staff receive monthly supervision and they said this helps them to focus on their practice and gives them the opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns that they may have. All members of the staff team are completing a relevant childcare qualification. The company recognised that the training provider being used was not fulfilling its contract. Therefore, they have sourced another provider and staff are now receiving good support to complete this qualification within the necessary timescales.

Generally, records and plans for the young person are of good quality, and show the young person's vulnerabilities and the progress he has made. However, some records are not signed and dated by the author, the social worker or by other relevant staff and the acting managers. This does not show that everyone agrees with the plans, nor does it demonstrate that they are aware of any changes to the plans.

External monitoring of the home is good. The visitor evaluates the records and practice in the home. He is new to the home and he has identified some actions to be taken in relation to shortfalls raised in this report. The acting managers have put together an action plan from these findings and they have incorporated them into the development plan for the home.

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: 2500668

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Idem Living Limited

Registered provider address: Newlands, 1a Huyton Hey Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L36 5SE

Responsible individual: Andrew Palmer

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Pam Nuckley: social care regulatory inspector

Karen Willson: social care regulatory inspector

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