

2513339

Central Bedfordshire Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority. It can provide care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home's registered manager resigned from the post with effect from 28 September 2023. However, the registered manager had not been involved in the day-to-day management of the home since May 2023.

Inspection date: 3 October 2023

This monitoring visit

One child was living at the home at the time of this monitoring visit.

Following the assurance inspection on 9 August 2023, Ofsted served two compliance notices. The compliance notices were in relation to the protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. This monitoring visit took place to assess the action that leaders and managers have taken in response to the serious shortfalls.

Risk assessments have improved. They are comprehensive, detailed and updated promptly. When risks change, the new information is recorded with clear guidance for the staff. This supports staff to manage risk effectively and keep the child safe.

The staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and the whistle-blowing policy. Safeguarding matters are discussed in team meetings and staff supervision sessions. There have been three safeguarding notifications since the last inspection, and the correct procedures have been followed.

There have been improvements to the internal monitoring of the home. The responsible individual provides regular oversight, and the independent person provides a comprehensive monthly overview of the home.

All staff have completed their mandatory training, including safeguarding training. Further training has been put in place to ensure that staff can meet the child's individual needs.

Record-keeping has improved. All staff now use the same computer system, and records are stored safely. The child's social worker, the independent reviewing officer and the responsible individual use the same system to ensure that records can be easily accessed.

Staff are building positive relationships with the child. This has resulted in the child engaging more with activities such as baking and enjoying regular dog-walking trips out in the community. Staff recently organised a celebratory meal out with family members. They captured this special moment by taking photos for the child to keep as part of their life story.

The registered manager left in September 2023. However, he had not been managing the home since May 2023. An interim agency manager started on 14 August 2023, shortly after the last inspection. However, he has not been appointed with a view to becoming the registered manager of the home.

Previously, staffing consisted of a mix of agency and permanent staff. This is now solely agency staff. The home's statement of purpose has been updated to include this information. However, the home is not fully working in accordance with the statement of purpose. For example, it still says that children are involved with the recruitment of all front-line staff.

The use of physical interventions has reduced. There have been two incidents since the last inspection. When physical intervention is required for safety reasons, the incidents are recorded promptly. However, staff are not receiving debriefs within the required timescales, and on one occasion, the view of the child had not been sought. This may hinder the effective review and implementation of strategies to prevent recurrence.

Most of the staff are receiving regular, good-quality supervision that enables them to reflect on their practice. However, five of the staff have not received supervision since the last inspection.

The provider has met the steps set out in the compliance notices and the requirements raised at the last inspection. Three further requirements have been raised at this monitoring visit.

The provider has notified Ofsted of its intent to cancel the registration of the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/12/2021	Full	Good
08/07/2019	Full	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, The 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	29 November 2023
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5))	27 October 2023
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of any measure of control, they, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	27 October 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff, including agency staff, receive supervision that enables them to reflect and act on how their own feelings and behaviour may be affected by the behaviour of the children they care for. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)
- The registered person should ensure that no more than half the staff on duty at the home at any one time, by day or night, are from an external agency. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.17)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home in respect of the steps set out in the compliance notices.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2513339

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Registered provider address: Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford,
Central Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

Responsible individual: Joy Piper

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lynne Drage, Social Care Inspector

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