

2523027

Kennet Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and was registered to provide care for up to six children at the time of this inspection. Following this inspection, the home is now registered to provide care for one child. The home aims to create a warm, caring, safe and supportive environment which enables children to recover from past life experiences and grow to achieve their full potential.

There has been no registered manager since 28 September 2020.

Inspection date: 16 June 2021

This monitoring visit

This home was registered in June 2019. A monitoring visit took place on 22 July 2020 and an assurance visit took place on 12 October 2020. No serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children were identified.

This children's home was judged inadequate at the first full inspection, on 11 and 12 May 2021. Four compliance notices were issued, in relation to the protection of children, and leadership and management. 13 June 2021 was the due date for the completion of the steps to meet the compliance notices. The registration of the children's home was suspended on 13 May 2021.

This monitoring visit was to assess progress towards meeting the compliance notices and to check that the suspension notice was being adhered to.

No children have been accommodated since 13 May 2021. The provider has complied with the suspension notice.

Since the previous inspection, the manager has resigned and left the organisation. The provider has appointed a new manager, who is due to start employment in the coming months. The home remains without a registered manager.

The provider conducted a review of the failings to safeguard children and produced a report. They concluded that there were systemic failures in this home that have not been manifest in other homes within the same organisation. Senior leaders accept their own failings in allowing the poor culture to develop. The shortfalls that they identified, particular to this home, include not enough staff to deliver the aims and objectives in the statement of purpose and poor oversight by the manager, especially after his return to work following a serious illness.

Senior leaders have restructured the management and staffing arrangements. They have reviewed processes and taken the necessary action to improve performance. Specific safeguarding responsibility and accountability are now clear. Senior leaders have added additional safeguards such as the use of CCTV to deter unwanted visitors and the installation of tamper-proof window restrictors. Senior leaders have reviewed their own monitoring practice, with clear plans to bring about the necessary change.

Senior leaders have reviewed the job descriptions. These now contain details of the safeguarding responsibilities at the various levels in the organisation. Senior leaders have introduced a cyclical monthly safeguarding training programme that all staff are required to attend.

Senior leaders have reviewed practice and the underpinning policy to ensure that safeguarding is at the forefront of practice. For example, they have changed the supervision records to document discussions about specific practice in relation to safeguarding. They have put systems in place to hold the manager accountable for overseeing incident records and for the manager to hold staff to account for their practice.

The provider has reviewed the approach to significant incidents. Lessons learned from this review include that there was insufficient oversight of significant incidents by the manager, and ineffective communication with placing social workers. The review also found that senior leaders were over-confident in the ability of the manager and did not hold him to account to the standard that was required. The provider acknowledges these failings. They have put in place changes to systems, staffing and recording to prevent recurrence of the earlier failings.

The provider has refurbished the property to the required standard. Senior leaders have been meticulous in identifying the necessary repairs and all have been completed. They have considered how the condition of the home declined to the level that it became unsuitable for children. They concluded that the systemic failings, including the shortfalls in their monitoring and over-confidence in the manager, all contributed to the decline. The provider has established a new communication system with the maintenance contractor to effect timely repairs in the future. They have clear plans to employ a handyman to further enhance their response to any damage to the home.

In relation to the leadership and management of the children's home, senior leaders have reviewed the overall staff qualifications, experience and training. They have concluded that they cannot currently accommodate six children with the current staff mix. They have redeployed some staff to other homes within the same organisation to gain experience. Senior leaders have scheduled training, bespoke for each team member, over the next three months, to equip staff to provide safe care for children. They recognise the need to have a formal management development plan in place for the deputy manager.

The provider has undertaken a review that included a self-evaluation of the senior leadership shortfalls. Senior leaders concluded that they had an over-dependence on the manager to alert senior leaders to significant issues, with no formal systems in place to hold him to account. They have introduced new formal monitoring systems which include input from the responsible individual. The responsible individual acknowledged the challenge of monitoring from overseas, especially during COVID-19 (coronavirus) travel restrictions. The provider has now completed the pre-planned changes of the structure of the organisation, meaning the new responsible individual is in place. The workforce development plan, previously delegated to the deputy manager, is now the responsibility of the director and the new responsible individual.

Senior leaders have introduced other changes such as ensuring the weekly fire checks cover all fire protection equipment, clear lines of accountability to approve records of events in the home and clearer guidance for staff in written plans. At this monitoring visit, Ofsted found that sufficient progress had been made in meeting the compliance notices. Senior leaders accept the shortfalls and their role in allowing a poor culture to develop. They have taken the necessary action to address the weaknesses. The effectiveness will be tested at future inspections.

The suspension of registration was lifted. However, Ofsted found that there were insufficient suitably qualified, trained and experienced staff to care for six children. Ofsted imposed a condition of registration that the home can provide care and accommodation for one child. Ofsted will review this at the next full inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/05/2021	Full	Inadequate

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 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— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d))	30 September 2021

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2523027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Registered provider address: c/o Stan Colaco & Co, Regus Business Centre,
Centurion House, London Road, Staines-upon-Thames TW18 4AX

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Keith Riley, 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 children looked after, 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 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021