

2523027

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for two children. According to the home's statement of purpose, its aims are 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: 28 March 2022

Date of last inspection: 31 August 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged inadequate at the first full inspection on 11 and 12 May 2021. The registration of the children's home was suspended on 13 May 2021. A monitoring visit took place on 16 June 2021. The suspension of registration was lifted following the monitoring visit, and Ofsted imposed a condition of registration that the home can provide care and accommodation for one child.

The home was judged requires improvement to be good at the subsequent full inspection in August 2021. That inspection reviewed the imposed condition on the home's registration and changed the restriction from providing care and accommodation for one child to two. This notice of proposal was accepted by the provider on 5 October 2021.

This interim inspection reviewed the home's requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has improved effectiveness.

Senior leaders have recently decided to close this home and move their staff team to other children's homes operated by this provider. This is due to staffing shortages across the provider's children's homes. Senior leaders informed the inspector that this was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties it has caused them in retaining and recruiting skilled and experienced staff.

The provider has agreed to inform Ofsted when it considers that the home is ready for children to move into. The responsible individual informed the inspector that this was likely to be in May 2022. There are plans to consider increasing the number of children who can be accommodated. The decor of the home is of a good standard, and all the rooms are ready for children to move into.

Due to the home's closure, the staff have supported two children to move into another children's home managed by this provider. The staff spent time speaking to the children about the move and made sensitive plans, in line with the children's requests, to make sure the moves went as well as possible. For one child, the move mirrored their plans for gaining more independence and supported their future wishes.

The children made progress living in this home before they moved on. Both the children showed improvements in their educational attendance. This was reflected positively for one child at their most recent education review. There was also a noticeable decrease in behaviours that challenged the staff team, including incidents of the children leaving the home unsupervised. This meant the children spent more time with the staff and, in turn, their engagement with all professionals improved.

The staff understood the importance of the children attending routine health appointments. They took the time to explain to, and educate, the children about the roles of healthcare professionals and the potential outcomes of not attending places like the dentist or opticians. This approach meant that the staff, on occasion, were successful in supporting the children in attending their scheduled health appointments. This was good progress, given the children's starting points.

The staff regularly reviewed and updated the children's plans. These plans included the necessary background information the staff needed to know to help them support the children in an informed and sensitive way. This included the review of risk management strategies after significant events in the home. This helped the staff to work in a consistent and unified manner, contributing to the decrease in risk-taking behaviours displayed at times by the children.

Senior leaders audit the agency staff folders with the agency provider once a year. This has driven improvements forward for this children's home. This audit and review help senior leaders to ensure that the temporary staff working in the home are subject to the same safer recruitment checks as their full-time employed staff.

There has been no registered manager in the home since 28 September 2020. However, this home was managed by a permanent manager from 7 November 2020 until 17 May 2021. Their application to register with Ofsted was cancelled following their resignation from the home. There is now a new manager in post, and she has submitted her application to register with Ofsted. Therefore, this requirement has been met.

When one child first moved into the home, their needs were not effectively assessed and planned for. There was a lack of scrutiny by leaders and managers to ensure that risks were fully understood and the staff's skill set considered. As a result of this practice, not all the staff had the necessary training and skills in meeting all the needs of one child. Although the child's progress in the home was good, it could have improved their experiences and enhanced the staff's awareness. As a result, part of the leadership and management requirement has been reissued, and an additional requirement under care planning has been served.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
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 staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))	1 June 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	1 June 2022

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 2523027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kennet Care Limited

Registered provider address: 5 Theale Lakes Business Park, Moulden Way,
Sulhamstead, Reading, Berkshire RG7 4GB

Responsible individual: Dennis Austin-Visser

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, 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 2022