

2526435

Registered provider: Shalamar Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider runs this home for up to three children who cannot live at home or in a foster placement.

The registered manager left in September 2019.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 October 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: not applicable

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(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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, when appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-	13/12/2019

attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))	
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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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)(iii)(v))	13/12/2019
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	13/12/2019

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(e))	
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– 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)(d)) In particular, obtain a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing.	13/12/2019
Ensure that every individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. The relevant qualification is– the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is– in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32(4)(a)(b)(5)(a))	13/12/2019
If the person who is in day-to-day charge of the children's home proposes to be absent from the home for a continuous period of 28 days or more, the registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI of the proposed absence.	08/11/2019

Except in the case of an emergency or unforeseen absence, a notice under paragraph (1) must–

be given no later than one month before the proposed absence commences, or within such shorter period as may be agreed with HMCI; and

specify with respect to the proposed absence–

its length or expected length;

the reason for it;

the arrangements which have been made for running the home during the absence;

the address, name and qualifications of the person who will be responsible for the home during the absence; and

in the case of the absence of the registered manager, the arrangements that have been, or are proposed to be, made for appointing another person to manage the home during the absence, including the proposed date by which the appointment is to be made.

If the absence arises as a result of an emergency or is unforeseen, the registered person must give notice of the absence–

within one week of the beginning of the absence; and

specifying the matters in paragraph (2)(b).

If the notice required under paragraph (2) or (3) has not been given as required, it must be given without delay.
(Regulation 48(1)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(3)(a)(b)(4))

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, provide the staff with resources on understanding gang activity.

Inspection judgements

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

This is the first inspection since registration in July 2019.

Three of four children have moved on from the home since their admission. Children have not lived at this home for a sufficient period of time in which to make progress. Two children's placements ended in an emergency. The staff group is not sufficiently experienced to manage the complexity of balancing the management of children's behaviour with, for example, their mental health support needs. Unplanned endings do not reflect the approach and ethos that the provider describes in the home's statement of purpose.

The learning and education plan for the child at the home at the time of this inspection was not evident. The children who have moved on did not live at the home long enough to enable the staff to adopt a meaningful approach to enabling their learning. Children have not made measurable progress towards reaching their educational potential.

Children receive a warm reception at the home and individual staff do a very good job of helping every child to feel welcome. When possible, staff go to visit children before their arrival and children are invited to visit and to come to look around their new home. A social worker said, 'I was impressed with how the staff engaged with our child.'

Children receive encouragement and funds from the provider to personalise their bedrooms. The home's interior is well appointed, offering generous accommodation in which children can relax.

Children receive significant help and support to attend any appointments. The staff go above and beyond expectations to help children to remain in touch with and to spend time with people who are important to them. This helps children to remain connected to their families.

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

Children who were previously known to go missing still go missing. Staff take appropriate action and are caring and responsive when a child leaves their care. The responsible individual 'goes above and beyond' to respond. On one occasion, he demonstrated his concern for a child by coming out to the home to locate and return the child to the home. However, individual staff are inconsistent in their responses when children's behaviour indicates that they are likely to go missing. This inconsistency puts children at greater risk.

Written risk assessments show that staff gather a lot of information about children and their backgrounds. However, the assessments fail to capture the significance of some

important information, for example when children have been associated with gang activity. The risk assessments are not clear enough in directing staff to take preventative steps to reduce the likelihood of an event occurring. This failure increases the likelihood of a child coming to harm.

The staff defuse some incidents well, because they are empathetic, patient and kind. However, the police have been called to the home and one child's placement ended when the child was removed. Staff use physical intervention occasionally when children are hurting themselves or are assaulting the staff. Sometimes the intervention helps to de-escalate behaviour and sometimes it does not. This means that this measure is not consistently successful.

The provider offers financial incentives and favours a restorative justice approach to managing consequences. Placement goals help children to see what they are working towards. There have been no complaints from children, their parents or the placing local authorities. There have been no allegations against staff.

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

The registered manager had a period of absence and subsequently left the post in September 2019. The responsible individual notified Ofsted of the manager's leaving date but failed to provide the name and qualifications of the person responsible for the home. Consequently, Ofsted did not have sufficient understanding of the day-to-day management arrangements.

The registered manager from the provider's other children's home and the organisation's director of care have been working at the home. Overall, there are sufficient staff and the new team is forming. A small number of dedicated bank staff complement the core team. Some staff have worked previously for the provider and therefore bring a relevant understanding of the home's ethos. However, only one member of the core team has the required level 3 qualification. In addition, one member of staff who has worked at a children's home for over two years has not achieved a relevant level 3 qualification within the requisite timescale. This means that, overall, the staff group lacks relevant knowledge.

The provider has failed to record that a responsible manager is satisfied with the explanation provided on gaps in previous employment for a member of staff. The recruitment records therefore do not demonstrate that the provider has obtained a full background history.

Staff said that they receive good support and that the responsible individual and the director of the company are frequently available to them to offer informal support. The provider gives staff a suitable induction. Staff access a range of training, including online training and targeted workshops that are organised by the director in subjects such as safeguarding, first aid, self-harm and attachment. Despite this, the range of training does not go far enough to reflect the needs of every child who has lived at the home. Communication with other agencies and, in particular, the placing local authorities is

good. The responsible individual is working with the organisation's director to recruit another manager. During this recruitment period he remains available to staff for guidance and advice.

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 difference 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: 2526435

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Shalamar Children Limited

Registered provider address: 31B King Street, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 0HJ

Responsible individual: Samuel Connor

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Rosie Davie, social care inspector

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