

2528141

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one child who may have emotional or behavioural needs. The home is owned and operated by a private organisation.

The home has a manager who registered with Ofsted in November 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 3 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 5 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Two compliances notices were issued to the provider following a monitoring visit on 28 January 2021. These notices were in relation to breaches of regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. Both notices were reviewed at a monitoring visit on 3 March 2021 which concluded that both notices were met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Aspects of care planning for the child who lives in the home are poor. Staff do not support the child to overcome barriers to learning. As a result, the child is not engaging in any form of education or employment.

The child's emotional well-being has improved since he came to live in the home. He has built some positive relationships with staff.

The child told the inspector that when he made a complaint about a member of staff he 'didn't feel listened to' following the response given to him by the manager.

The child has been supported to see his family, however, this was not in line with the local authority care plan.

The child has been supported to develop some independent living skills, such as shopping for food. However, the lack of a local authority pathway plan means that independence plans for the child are unclear. The manager has not taken steps to address this with the local authority.

The child's basic health needs are met. The child has access to the in-house clinical psychologist. The child has benefited from direct work which has supported him to regulate his emotions.

The local authority care plan has not been followed in regard to staffing arrangements for the child, placing the child at risk.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Risk management is ineffective. Managers are failing to provide staff with the right information to enable them to manage the child's behaviours, risks and vulnerabilities safely and effectively.

The manager has not taken sufficient action to address poor conditions in the home which resulted in a child's bedroom and bathroom becoming uninhabitable. This presented a significant health and safety risk. The child told the inspector he was living in conditions of 'neglect'.

The staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of risks to the child and the protective strategies in place. However, the quality of written risk management plans is variable and at times, information is inconsistent or missing. This means that staff are not able to safeguard the child effectively. This also reflects weaknesses in the manager's monitoring of the paperwork.

When the child has been missing from the home for a significant period of time, return interviews have not taken place. Lack of a return interview for the child means that an opportunity to uncover information to keep the child safe in future has been missed. Furthermore, it means staff are unable to safeguard the child effectively.

Allegations against staff have not been notified to the local authority designated officer or to Ofsted. This lack of transparency and partnership working prevents the local authority from ensuring that the correct action has been taken and that concerns relating to staff practice are centrally recorded. Similarly, it hinders Ofsted's ability to review the information in notifications to ensure that the provider has taken the necessary action to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager has registered with Ofsted in December 2021 having worked in the home as the acting manager since July 2021.

The manager is caring and warm and has good intentions. She has built up a positive relationship with the child. However, she is not leading the home in a way that enables the child to achieve his full potential.

The manager and staff have failed to meet the basic care needs of the child. Staff have failed to address the poor conditions in the child's bedroom and bathroom or carried out bedroom checks. The manager has failed to ensure that plans are sufficiently clear to ensure that staff are aware of the manager's expectations of childcare standards and staff roles and responsibilities.

Furthermore, there has been a failure on the manager's part to make improvements at the home. Failure to monitor standards effectively or take action when concerns are identified means that poor practice and poor standards of care continue, and the child does not benefit from an improving service.

The staffing structure currently implemented is not sufficient to deliver good care for the child living in this home.

The manager went against the child's local authority care plan and allowed the child to have extended family time, despite this not being agreed by the local authority. This caused the child significant distress when the local authority became aware and reduced the family time that had been taking place.

Staff meetings take place and are informative. Supervision takes place for all staff which offers reflection to help staff learn.

In discussion with the inspector, the manager demonstrated a lack of insight into the shortfalls in the standards of care and safety. She was not able to articulate where areas requiring improvement had been identified, or how they would be

developed. The manager told the inspector that she did not know the regulations, despite being registered with Ofsted since November 2021.

Recording in the home is poor and lacks accountability. There is insufficient management oversight of the quality of care. For example, the manager did not ensure that a missing-from-care return interview took place for the child when he had been missing from the home for a significant period of time.

The manager and the responsible individual did not inform the inspector of a serious safeguarding incident that was disclosed by the child during the inspection. This lack of transparency on behalf of the manager has therefore failed to demonstrate that the day-to-day care for children is arranged and delivered, so as to keep the child safe.

Due to staffing difficulties, the manager has been required to cover shifts at the home. This has then impacted on her managerial duties and has resulted in poor oversight of recording and risk management.

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, where 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; 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	10 April 2022

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)(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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(d))	10 April 2022
*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.	10 April 2022

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; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)(h))	
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 arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that each child’s relevant plans are followed; that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child’s parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child’s relevant plans; that the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if—	10 April 2022

the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(c)(d)(e)(i))	
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	2 March 2022
*The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. 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.	10 April 2022

(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this 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: 2528141

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 19 Lancaster Road, Carnforth LA5 9LD

Responsible individual: Richard Witt

Registered manager: Keri Alston

Inspector

Rachel Springford, Social Care Inspector

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