

2537801

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It currently provides care and accommodation for up to three children.

There is no registered manager in post. A new manager has been appointed but is not yet overseeing the home.

Inspection date: 30 September 2022

This monitoring visit

The children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 10, 11 and 18 August 2022. This monitoring visit took place to monitor two compliance notices that were served following the full inspection.

The first compliance notice was issued in relation to the help and protection of children. The inspector had found significant shortfalls in respect of pre-employment suitability checks, which had put children at significant risk of harm. Furthermore, the inspector had identified a lack of clear and appropriate professional boundaries in the home, which had hindered staff and children's ability to identify and report concerns surrounding staff conduct and abusive practice.

A second notice was issued in relation to the monitoring and review of staff's communication and relationships with children. Shortfalls were also identified in respect of the action taken to respond to concerns raised by people external to the home. Managers and staff had failed to recognise and act on signs of misconduct and abuse.

In working to meet the notices, the provider has completed a full review of the relevant policies and procedures in place to protect children. This included reviewing the code of conduct and safer recruitment, safeguarding, and complaints policies

and procedures. Staff have revisited these and during the visit were able to demonstrate good working knowledge of the revised policies.

Following the review of recruitment and vetting procedures, positive changes have been made to interview techniques and questions, suitability assessments and the information provided to staff during their induction period. Risk assessments which consider potential employees' criminal histories and suitability have been strengthened and managers have been given increased responsibility for potential employees' and pre-employment checks. These improved processes ensure increased accountability and oversight from managers and senior leaders and serve to ensure that those working with children are safe to do so. This also ensures that any potential risks arising from employees' histories are appropriately assessed and mitigated.

Leaders, managers and staff have completed comprehensive training in relation to the protection of children. Safer recruitment, professional boundaries and contextual safeguarding training have been completed by all staff permanently working in the home. Managers have completed in depth-complaints training, which supports their understanding of complaints, concerns and allegation management.

Staff have benefited from comprehensive training in respect of risk management and assessment. Their understanding of this has also been assessed in depth by managers. As a result, children's risk assessments are now clear, comprehensive and up to date.

The provider has made amendments and additions to the code of conduct. At the time of this visit, the code remains under review. However, positive changes have been made to ensure that the expectations of staff are clear and that they are fully aware of its contents.

Records of team meetings and staff supervision demonstrate that staff knowledge is assessed by managers. Recent meetings have specifically assessed staff's understanding of professional boundaries, complaints, the code of conduct and assessing risk. Staff's improved knowledge and understanding in these areas means that concerns are more likely to be recognised, reported and responded to effectively. The inspector was also able to see that the procedures in place for staff to whistle-blow and respond to allegations from children were followed by staff and managers in response to a concern raised.

Children's meetings demonstrate that children have had the opportunity to raise complaints, concerns and worries and that staff have responded robustly to these. For example, one child had said that she was unhappy due to increased restrictions in the home to ensure her safety. However, appropriate advocacy and local authority visits were arranged and discussions were held to support the child with her feelings and views. This demonstrates that children can report concerns and express their views and wishes to those external to the home and staff.

Several development days have been held with managers and senior staff across the organisation. At these, the provider has used lessons learned from the full inspection to review the processes across the organisation. This has resulted in wider improvements to safeguarding processes and improved quality of care for children.

Following this visit, both compliance notices are deemed to have been met. The inspector was also able to determine that sufficient action had been taken to meet the requirements issued at the previous inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/06/2021	Full	Good
18/02/2020	Full	Good

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: 2537801

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Registered provider address: Exceptional Care Limited, Malthouse Business Centre, Southport Road, Ormskirk L39 1QR

Responsible individual: Susan Rolfe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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