

2538285

Union House NW Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children or young people who have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The home registered in November 2019 and has been operational since February 2020.

The home has not yet had a post-registration inspection due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions. However, the home received a monitoring visit in June 2020 and an assurance visit in September 2020.

There is a registered manager in post.

Inspection date: 18 March 2021

This monitoring visit

The purpose of the visit was to look at a number of safeguarding notifications received by Ofsted. The requirements and recommendations raised at the last visit were not looked at during this visit. Therefore, they remain requirements and recommendations until the home's next inspection.

Children said that they feel safe in the home and that staff understand them. Children have positive relationships with the staff team and feel listened to. One child said, 'You couldn't get better than the staff team here. It is a proper good care home. I would recommend it 100%.'

Social workers reported that children are safe in the home, and that staff are positive role models for children. One social worker said, '[Name] is in a stable placement. I have not seen him so emotionally stable. The staff team are nurturing and are invested in him.'

Staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff recognise the importance of monitoring the relationships between children, as they present some similar risk-taking behaviours. Since living at the home, children have made improvements in relation to reducing incidents of missing from home, substance misuse and criminal behaviours.

When safeguarding incidents take place, the staff team takes appropriate action to support children. The senior team works closely with the complex safeguarding team, the missing-from-home police officers and the child sexual exploitation team, to ensure that any concerns are communicated promptly. Joint support from the staff team and agencies, such as specialist mental health services, ensures that children are educated about safe relationships and positive mental well-being.

Missing-from-home records evidence that staff have a thorough understanding of children's missing-from-home protocols. Return-home interviews take place regularly. The manager's evaluation reflects any changes to strategies and care plans to try to prevent children from going missing. An example of this is when a child was allowed to form a COVID-19 social bubble and stay at a friend's home overnight to help build trust and prevent further missing-from-home incidents.

Children are given clear messages about the health implications of substance misuse. Regular environment checks, room searches and welfare checks are completed to ensure that children are thoroughly monitored and working with the agreed house rules. The staff team obtains additional support and guidance from the youth offending team when children refuse to engage with substance misuse agencies.

Significant conversations and support sessions reflect that the staff team is invested in children's care and progress. Children have regular access to a training hub and youth workers that provides children with opportunities to further educate themselves about substance misuse, online safety and gang-related risks.

Children's engagement in education is a significant improvement since the assurance visit. All children engage in full-time education and are enthusiastic about their educational prospects. Social workers reported that this is a huge achievement for some children, who have not engaged in education for a long period of time.

Staff understand the whistleblowing policy and said that if they have any concerns about the operation of the home or a colleague's practice, they feel comfortable raising their concerns with the leadership team. There is evidence to demonstrate that when concerns are raised about practice in the home, the manager takes this seriously and acts appropriately to investigate the concerns.

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (Regulation 12 (1))	08 October 2020
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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 (2)(f)(h))	22 October 2020
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))	22 October 2020
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	22 October 2020

The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use of the measure. within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	22 October 2020
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. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	22 October 2020
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—	22 October 2020

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(b) (5))	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46 (1))	22 October 2020

Recommendations

- The registered provider should ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10.)

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: 2538285

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Union House NW Ltd

Registered provider address: 82 Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1LL

Responsible individual: Ciara Beckett

Registered manager: Rachel Bulcock

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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