

2540658

Registered provider: Tressell Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children or young people, irrespective of gender. The home specialises in caring for children or young people who may have been, or who are, experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since the home's registration in May 2019.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 March 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and are not protected, or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: this is the home's first inspection since registration

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable.

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Inspection type

Inspection judgement

This is the home's first inspection since registration.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

This is the first inspection since the home opened in September 2019. The current standards of care and support provided at this home mean that the children's safety, health and emotional well-being are not being adequately met. The lack of coordinated placement planning to support the children effectively at a critical period in their lives is placing them at significant risk and potentially compromising their future life chances.

There are currently three children living in the home. One child is due to leave, as the provider reported that it was unable to meet his needs or keep him safe. Another child had their placement ended within two weeks, due to the staff being unable to keep her safe.

Aspects of children's health needs are either not identified or, if they are, decisive action is not taken to manage them. For example, the records held in the home indicate that children had refused to attend planned medical appointments. There was no further information to show what action or strategies were planned to support children in addressing their basic health needs. Furthermore, managers and staff failed to seek medical assistance for a 12-year-old child who sustained an ankle injury after a fall, and for a child who was coughing up blood. This lack of action to address children's health needs places them at significant risk of harm.

When children refuse to attend their education provision, they do not engage in purposeful activity. Poor routines and a lack of structure to children's days limit their opportunities to reach their full educational potential, and affect their future life chances.

Records do not provide a full insight into the children's lives. For example, the few records that are on the children's files detail informal discussions, rather than providing a more comprehensive record of planned sessions that address the individual needs of the child. For example, there are no records to show the work that has been done during key-working sessions to educate the children about the risks that they are exposed to, such as risks associated with drug misuse. Therefore, there is limited information with which to measure the children's progress or identify the effectiveness of the support provided.

Contrary to the home's admissions policy and procedures, not all children have benefited from a detailed compatibility risk assessment or a thorough appraisal of their needs. The registered manager offered a placement to a new child without clearly identifying or assessing, or planning how to address, their full range of needs and the resulting impact of these on other children living in the home. This has resulted in disruption among the group of children living in the home and a child's placement ending prematurely.

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

The registered manager and staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities in regard to keeping children safe. They have failed to consistently report and record all safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action in a timely way.

The registered manager and staff are unable to identify, manage or minimise the risks posed to children. Risk assessments are of poor quality. They prevent the staff from having a clear understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities, and do not include consideration of their previous known risks. The assessments do not provide staff with effective strategies to enable them to keep children safe. For example, swift action is not taken to ensure that all staff are aware of changes to assessed risk levels following incidents of drug misuse, exploitation and fire starting. This fails to ensure that risks are managed consistently by staff, and that appropriate support is in place to help keep children safe.

The children are not kept safe when they are in the community because staff do not know their whereabouts for prolonged periods of the day. Furthermore, staff do not know if the children are receiving a healthy and balanced diet, as the children are effectively only in the home when they go to sleep at night, and have very few meals in the home. This means that children are not protected and cared for effectively. This may place them at risk of significant harm due to their vulnerabilities and potential exposure to drugs misuse, criminality and exploitation.

Records in the home state that all children have been drinking vodka in one child's bedroom. Staff described on incident sheets that children were slurring their words and had been sick. There was no evidence that staff sought medical advice or monitored the children to ensure that they were safe, and the alcohol was not affecting them severely. This failed to protect the children and potentially could have placed them at risk of significant harm.

There is an inconsistent approach to behaviour management in the home. Behaviour management plans lack guidance for staff to follow. As a result, incidents are poorly and inconsistently managed by staff. Staff are not consistent in their approach to using rewards and sanctions because they lack guidance from the registered manager on using these strategies. Consequently, there is no clear recording of sanctions and rewards that have been used.

The arrangements for the administration of medication to children are not robust. There have been errors in the recording and handling of medication. This represents a failure to follow the home's own policies and procedures for the handling, recording, safekeeping and safe administration of medicines, and potentially places children at serious risk of harm.

The provider has failed to scrutinise information about staff to ensure that they are suitable to work in the home. For example, gaps in employment had not been considered and references were not consistently obtained or verified for some staff.

This does not demonstrate that action is being taken to ensure that only suitable people are working with children.

Managers have failed to ensure that rosters accurately reflect which members of staff are working in the home. There is no clear record of who has worked in the home. This is not safe practice for staff or children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager is suitably qualified to undertake her role. However, her lack of action in regard to ensuring that effective care planning is in place for each child, and in regard to ensuring that the staff team strictly adheres to safeguarding procedures to protect children, has led to the serious failings found during this inspection.

The children live in a home that is poorly managed. The poor leadership means that the home is unable to fulfil its own aims and objectives. The staff are unclear about the ethos and philosophy of the home as described in the statement of purpose. Given the serious shortfalls highlighted in this inspection, the home is not acting in accordance with its own statement of purpose.

Management oversight and monitoring of the home have failed to identify areas of weakness in the home. As a result, action has not been taken to address these areas of weakness. Internal monitoring does not take place regularly and, as a result, the quality and standard of care have fallen to unacceptable levels.

The manager has not reviewed the home's records, or evaluated incidents that have occurred, in order to identify shortfalls in staff practice and highlight patterns and trends. Consequently, areas for development are not clearly highlighted and there is no meaningful development plan to address areas of concern. This means that leaders and managers are not acting to improve the experiences, care and safety of children. As a result, children's progress, welfare and safety are compromised.

The provider and registered manager have failed to provide staff with regular supervision. The lack of effective supervision means that the manager and staff are not being provided with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify any further training they may need. In addition, supervision does not provide them with an opportunity to ensure that they are promoting better outcomes for the children in their care.

Significant events involving children living at the home have not been reported to Ofsted. A failure to share information with all of the relevant people compromises the safety and welfare of children. Furthermore, the regulator is unable to carry out its monitoring function to ensure that appropriate action is taken by the provider to safeguard children.

The registered manager's approach to safeguarding is not rigorous enough to enable the home to protect children sufficiently and maintain good enough standards of care. The improvements suggested by the independent visitor have not been swiftly actioned.

More robust systems are needed to ensure that the safety and well-being of the children are always promoted.

Due to the significant safeguarding failings identified during the inspection and the failure of the manager and staff to protect children living in the home, the responsible individual made the decision to remove all of the children from the home.

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, the 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children and that they use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b))	27/04/2020
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(ii)(iii))	27/04/2020
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their education potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff—	27/04/2020

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; 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-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; and 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. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(iv)(viii)(ix))	
The health and well-being standard is that the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(c))	27/04/2020
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;	27/04/2020

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour, and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi))	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and 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	27/04/2020

necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; 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; 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; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(d)(e))	
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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—	27/04/2020

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(c)(e)(f)(g)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's 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; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(2)(b)(ii)(c))	27/04/2020
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revision and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b)(5))	27/04/2020
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and	27/04/2020

any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv))	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23(1))	27/04/2020
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25(2)(b))	27/04/2020
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— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;	27/04/2020

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and 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)(a)(b)(c)(d))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	27/04/2020
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the behaviour management policy') which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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 name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ('the user'), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	27/04/2020

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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 five 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(1)(a)(b)(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	27/04/2020
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that the records include a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, a record of the actual rotas worked, and a record of any persons who work at any time at the home.	27/04/2020
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;	27/04/2020

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)(i)(ii)(e))	
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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: 2540658

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Tressell Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 41, Price Street Business Centre, Price Street, Birkenhead, Cheshire CH41 4JQ

Responsible individual: Julie Collins

Registered manager: Tammy Alfonso

Inspector

Michelle Edge, Social Care Inspector

Elaine Allison, Social Care Inspector

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