

2540658

Registered provider: Tressell Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three children, who may have emotional and social difficulties or learning disabilities. It is operated by a private company.

The registered manager resigned in December 2020. An interim manager applied to Ofsted for registration on 26 March 2021 but withdrew their application on 31 August 2021. This interim manager is due to leave the position on 1 November 2021. A new interim manager has been identified and has made an application for registration.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 28 January 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. This report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 October 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 17 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This children's home was judged inadequate at the inspection visit on 17 March 2020. Following the inspection, the responsible individual made the decision to close the home. After the responsible individual informed Ofsted of the intention to accommodate children again, a monitoring visit took place on 12 August 2020. The outcome of the monitoring visit was that the responsible individual and manager were in a position to provide care and accommodation to children.

At an assurance visit on 2 December 2020, the inspector found serious and widespread concerns about the care and protection of children. Four compliance notices were issued under the following regulations: regulation 12, the protection of children standard; regulation 13, the leadership and management standard; regulation 14, the care planning standard; and regulation 40, notification of a serious event.

At a monitoring visit on 28 January 2021, we found that no children had lived at the home since 3 December 2020 and there was no manager in charge of the home. Consequently, the provider was not able to demonstrate that it had met the compliance notices. The responsible individual made the decision to close the home temporarily until March 2021, when a new manager was appointed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2020	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

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

Children's overall experiences and progress are not yet consistently good. This is because of weaknesses in the help and protection they receive and the leadership and management of the home.

Nevertheless, children live in a warm and nurturing home. They are happy and relaxed. They receive individualised care that is helping them to settle into the home and adjust to living together. The house is very comfortable. It is decorated, furnished and maintained to meet the children's personal needs.

Staff are caring and understanding. They are getting to know the children's characters and personal needs very well. Staff listen to children and respond to their views and wishes appropriately. Consequently, children are building trusting relationships with staff.

Children enjoy school and are doing well. Staff understand children's educational needs. They are supporting children to sustain the excellent attendance and progress they were making before moving into the home. Staff work closely with the children's teachers to support their learning and to deal with any difficulties. Staff supported a child who was unable to go to school to get the right support to promote her learning and gain qualifications.

Staff understand children's health needs and encourage them to have healthy lifestyles. They know how children's particular medical conditions and allergies may affect their lives. Staff make sure that children always get the care, advice and treatment to make sure that they are healthy. They are helping a child to overcome her fears about going to health appointments. The manager has pursued a review of a child's medication to make sure that the child gets the right treatment. The arrangements for storing and managing children's medication are safe.

Children receive well-planned care. Managers and staff have strong working relationships with the children's placing authority. Managers and the placing authority carefully considered the children's needs, the benefits of them living together, and the staff's ability to provide the care that the children required.

Children have had a positive experience of moving into the home. They were involved in the move and had introductions, visits and overnight stays that helped them to get to know staff and feel welcomed. Children's care is routinely monitored by the placing authority and staff to make sure that the children's needs are being met. Staff have worked well with the placing authority to prepare another child for her planned move to live with foster carers.

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

The practice in relation to helping and protecting children needs to improve. There is nothing to show that the failings found at this inspection have led to children suffering harm. However, if they are left unchecked, they may have the potential to do so.

Overall, children are safe and have a sense of security. Children feel able to talk to staff when they are worried or upset. However, some staff are uncertain about what they need to do if they have concerns about children's safety. They do not have a clear understanding of the home's safeguarding procedures. This lack of understanding resulted in staff not reporting a potential safeguarding concern about a child immediately to their manager and the placing authority. This delayed the investigation into the concerns.

Children are not involved in high-risk behaviours and do not go missing from home. Staff provide them with a suitable level of supervision at home and in the community. However, staff do not anticipate the potential risk of children going missing from home. Children do not have individualised plans to identify the risks and show staff what to do if a child is missing. In addition, staff have not had dedicated training in when children go missing from home as set out in the home's locality risk assessment. The potential risks in the local community have not been fully evaluated to show how potential dangers can be managed safely.

The recruitment of staff is not always carried out in line with procedures that are designed to minimise potential risks to children's safety. On one occasion, the organisation allowed a person to work with children at the home before it had received all the person's references from their previous employers. When one reference was received, it showed concerns about the person's suitability. After investigation, the organisation ended the person's employment, but they had already looked after the children for several weeks.

Children know that staff are there to help them. Staff understand how children communicate their emotions in different ways. Staff are aware of the subtle clues that children may give through language and behaviour to show how they are feeling. They understand how children's experiences may affect their emotional health. Staff are working with schools and health and universal services effectively to provide children with the help that they need to recover from trauma.

Staff are helping children to develop socially aware behaviour and to build positive and healthy relationships. They help children to develop empathy and to see how their actions may affect other people. When children sometimes do not get on, staff support them to learn how to sort out problems constructively. Staff provide a consistent response that helps children to manage their emotions and to feel calm. Staff reward children's positive behaviour and challenge poor behaviour appropriately. Managers and staff reflected on which strategies work for individual children and have changed their practice. They have found that restricting a child's

use of a computer game as consequences for poor behaviour did not work and often made the situation worse. Instead, staff have found rewards and discussions with the child are better ways to help them.

Occasionally, children struggle to manage their emotions and staff have used physical interventions to keep everyone safe. The use of physical intervention has been safe and appropriate. These incidents are evaluated thoroughly by managers and been used as opportunities to improve practice. For example, staff have put things in place that have reduced a child's anxieties about who is collecting her from school and the car journey home.

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

The lack of a permanent registered manager and a settled staff team is compromising the home's capacity to provide children with a consistently good quality of care. The responsible individual has put in place interim management arrangements and is trying to recruit a new manager and staff.

Improvements have been made in some of the shortfalls identified at previous inspection visits, including education, supporting children to have positive relationships, the planning of children's care, the management of medication and fire safety. However, weaknesses remain in the protection of children, recruitment of staff and the leadership and management of the home.

There are not enough permanent experienced and qualified staff available to work at the home. This means that temporary and agency staff are being used to maintain the agreed staffing levels. Children, therefore, are being cared for by different people and not always receiving the continuity of care they need. The staff duty rosters do not provide an up-to-date record of who is working at the home and the actual time worked by the manager and staff.

Staff are enthusiastic and caring. They are providing a positive and nurturing place for children to live in. Staff feel valued and supported by the manager. However, staff are not always receiving the support, guidance and training that they need to develop their confidence, knowledge and skills. Staff are not receiving regular supervision as set out in the home's policies. The lack of regular supervision does not enable staff to understand their responsibilities, reflect on their practice and learning and to identify any further training that they need to support their continued professional development. Staff do not always have the opportunity for training relevant to the specific needs of children, including understanding foetal alcohol syndrome and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders, and safeguarding and missing-from-home procedures.

Staff do not have all the information, including up-to-date care plans and education, health and care plans, that they need to understand children's needs and plans. Also, children's records and plans are not always signed and dated by the person completing them.

The lack of effective management oversight of children's records, staff supervision and training is restricting the home's capacity to make and sustain improvements. The responsible individual's monitoring of the home has identified weaknesses consistent with the inspectors' findings. However, the shortfalls have not been addressed.

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. 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	30 November 2021
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	30 November 2021

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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 has sufficient staff to provide care for 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— 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)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	
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; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that—	30 November 2021

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; 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) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b)(c))	30 November 2021
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)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	30 November 2021
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The	30 November 2021

registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and 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.

This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.

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 CH41 4JQ

Responsible individual: Julie Collins

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Nick Veysey, Social Care Inspector

Marina Tully, Social Care Inspector

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