

2541467

Registered provider: Barnardo Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a charity. It provides care for up to four children. The home operates under a block contract arrangement with the local authority in which it is situated.

A new manager is in post and is in the process of submitting her application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people 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 and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/04/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff. Children are confident to come to staff with any concerns or complaints that they may have and know that the staff will help them to resolve them.

Children are encouraged to take part in physical activities, such as going to the gym, to stay fit and well. Healthcare plans are more reflective of each child's needs and enable staff to identify when external support is required. However, some children are not able to engage with these professionals and this is having a negative impact on their emotional health and well-being.

Education is problematic for some children. Two children have been out of education for some time and are refusing to engage in educational activities in the home. Consequently, they can spend long periods of time in their bedrooms.

The lack of planning around home education means children are out of a structured routine; this hinders their return to school. In contrast, staff appropriately challenge schools when children are excluded or are not getting the right support.

Care planning and record-keeping continue to improve. However, the records still contain some conflicting information and judgemental language. In addition, the registered manager did not secure updated care plans from the placing authority for the children who temporarily moved out of the home. This meant that the expectations and objectives for the moves were unclear.

Consultation with children has improved. Children have renamed the children's meetings as 'catch-ups'. Children participate well in the meetings and their wishes and feelings are carefully considered.

Children have regular opportunities to meet with family members and friends. All arrangements are carefully considered to ensure that the children see the people who are important to them and are safe. Staff are mindful that these visits can be stressful for some children and are available to support them.

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

Staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection and know the action to take should they have concerns about a child. Staff work well with professionals when concerns arise to help children get the right support, such as children who are now at risk of child sexual exploitation.

There has been an increase in children being missing from care. As a result, staff have raised this with the children's social workers to consider all the reasons for this. The home does not have a record of the children's independent return home interviews. Consequently, the manager and staff are unable to consider this information in their plans to prevent children from going missing.

Risk management planning is improving. Risk assessments are more detailed and outline the action to be taken by staff to mitigate risks to children. The children's plans are updated after any significant incidents.

There have been significant issues with bullying in the home. This resulted in two children being moved into unregistered settings as a temporary measure. Ofsted has spoken to the responsible individual about this and the impact on the children and organisation.

The home is well maintained and is a warm, welcoming environment. On the first day the inspection, the inspector identified that the doors on the ground floor were being locked at night. This affects the children's ability to evacuate quickly in an emergency. This practice ceased immediately after the inspector alerted the manager to this issue.

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

The home has been without a registered manager since September 2020. The interim manager has now been successful in securing the manager's post. She is a qualified and experienced manager who has a clear focus on what the home does well and the areas of development.

She is supported well by a suitably qualified and experienced deputy manager and together they are starting to bring about positive changes. The manager and deputy now have a secure foundation on which they can build.

The manager is aware of the training needs of staff and is taking steps to arrange this, especially around trauma theory, autism spectrum disorder and recording with care. Record-keeping is improving, but this is not yet to a consistently good standard. The workforce development plan is reflective of the current staff team.

Staff said that they are consulted well on the changes and feel supported by the new management team. Supervision now takes place on a regular basis and provides staff with the opportunity to have one-to-one professional discussions.

Monitoring by the manager is improving; however, there are still shortfalls that have not been identified. For example, the admissions and discharge book, physical interventions record, staff rotas and visitors book are not completed correctly.

Professionals are supportive of the home and comment on the progress that children are making. They acknowledge that some children are currently experiencing

difficulties in their lives. They said that the manager and staff are working with them to support the children.

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; 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; 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)(i)(ii)(viii)(ix))	27 May 2022
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— manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;	27 May 2022

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child 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)(iv)(b)(d)) In particular, ensure that staff are proactive in reducing bullying behaviour in the home so as to prevent children being moved into unregistered settings. Furthermore, staff should ensure that the doors on the ground floor are not locked overnight.	
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; 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)(c)(f)(h))	27 May 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and	27 May 2022

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 the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if— 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; the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission; or the child requests a review of the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(i)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that any changes in the placement of a child are carefully considered and their plans are reviewed and updated to reflect the changes in provision.	
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— details of the child’s behaviour leading to 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; and the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii))	27 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the action to take to prevent the bullying of children by other children in the home.

(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.16)

- The registered person should ensure, following any incident of a child being missing from care, that the child can speak to an independent person. Leaders and managers should consider any information from these interviews to inform their risk assessments. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear record-keeping. Staff should understand that the records play a significant part in a child’s life history; in particular, that the records tell the story of the child’s time in the home and that judgemental language is not used to describe the children or their behaviour. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraphs 14.4. and 14.5)

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: 2541467

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo Services Limited

Registered provider address: Barnardo House, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Stuart Ainge

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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