

2544217

Registered provider: Absolute Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to five children with emotional and/or behavioural needs.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 October 2021

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: 17 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

To address concerns identified at the home's last inspection in August 2021, Ofsted issued two compliance notices. These notices related to safeguarding systems and management arrangements. Progress in addressing these notices has been reviewed as part of this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/08/2021	Full	Inadequate
06/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's care experiences have improved following a review of the home's practices. Children are now making some progress and are more settled.

All children have education placements that are specific to their individual needs. Children are starting to achieve at school. One child recently attended a residential school trip, which was a positive experience for them. Staff support children with their education and homework. However, some staff do not have a good understanding of children's education targets and how these relate to other care-plan objectives.

Children have positive relationships with most of the staff team. Staff are warm and responsive to the children's needs. They provide nurturing care. Children benefit from having structured and consistent routines. Staff support children to stay in touch with people who are important to them. Children have regular opportunities to participate in activities and enjoy spending time with the staff team.

Staff have been undertaking additional training with the home's therapist to develop their understanding of children's needs and how best to meet these needs. Children have regular therapy sessions. As a result, they are developing strategies to manage their own emotions. Children's health needs are met. They have access to external professionals for specialist help when needed.

Care planning has improved, and all children now have a detailed placement plan on file. The home is working constructively with local authorities to support transition planning.

Children are regularly consulted with. In addition, staff make good use of informal discussions to capture children's views about the home and their care. The manager is a visible presence in the home and ensures that she has regular discussions with the children.

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

There has been a review of restraint policies and procedures, which has led to improvements in working practices. As a result, staff have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff have undertaken additional training in safeguarding and recording of incidents.

Children's risk assessments have improved. However, strategies for the management of specific risks do not give clear guidance to staff. The risk assessments for self-injurious behaviour do not clearly identify when medical attention should be sought,

or the actions that staff should take to support the child. Staff have not had clear guidance on the use of ligature cutters.

Allegations and concerns raised by children have been well managed. Relevant external professionals and agencies have been informed promptly so that they could be involved in decision-making.

Each child has completed a programme of work designed to help them understand how to keep safe online. Any inappropriate games and DVDs have now been removed from the children.

The physical environment is much improved so that it is clean, welcoming and homely. The manager has implemented a deep cleaning schedule, and there has been some redecoration of the home. Children's bedrooms are now personalised and well presented.

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

The manager has responded appropriately to the previous inspection findings. Managers have taken the necessary steps to adhere to the two compliance notices that were issued following the last inspection. Some requirements have been met in full. However, additional improvement is still required in relation to safeguarding and the management of the home. The manager has taken the opportunity to review systems and processes and make a range of improvements.

The staff team is positive about the changes that have been implemented and the impact that the manager is having in making improvements. Staff feel supported and valued. Induction processes are good. Consequently, new staff feel confident in their roles. Most of the staff have regular supervision and appraisal.

Staff have received additional training so that they can meet the additional needs of the children. However, the impact of training on practice has not been reviewed. This prevents the manager from understanding the effectiveness of the training.

The statement of purpose has been reviewed and re-written. It now provides a more accurate description of the home. However, some sections still do not clearly set out the home's care arrangements.

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) In particular, this relates to staff implementing and following risk assessments and that these are regularly reviewed and updated to contain all relevant information. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	1 December 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 promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	1 December 2021

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 the 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))

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.

Recommendation

The registered person should ensure that the information set out in the Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the service and resources available in the home, to inform placing authorities on how the home will be able to meet children's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)

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: 2544217

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Absolute Childrens Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 98 Grove Street, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 8DU

Responsible individual: Derrell Crump

Registered manager: Taslima Shaikh

Inspector

Sarah Orriss, Social Care Inspector

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