

2545027

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to three children. The home works with children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning difficulties.

The manager has been registered since September 2019.

Visit dates: 26 to 27 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 30 December 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Requires improvement to be good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

There is currently one child living at this home. The child has complex needs. The staff, therefore, provide high levels of supervision. They ensure that the child's rights are upheld by creating regular opportunities for her to contribute her views and express her wishes. Staff use pictorial symbols to support the child to understand important information. This enables the child to better understand her care arrangements and how to keep safe.

The staff's response to the COVID-19 pandemic is excellent. They regularly deep clean the home. The staff's and visitors' temperatures are routinely checked, and the staff record all visitors' details using a track and trace system. The staff spend time with the child, helping her to understand about COVID-19. This has reduced her anxiety and given her confidence when out in the community.

During the lockdown period, the staff have provided a range of stimulating and imaginative activities. They encouraged the child to try new hobbies. This has led her to discover new talents and interests like cooking and Origami.

The child is currently receiving home education. The staff coordinate an individual education plan that consists of tutor- and staff-led lessons. The staff are diligent in ensuring that the child experiences consistency and routine.

The staff prioritise the child's mental and physical health. There is a therapeutic programme of care that includes occupational therapy and psychological support. This has meant that the child has been able to significantly reduce self-harming and obsessional behaviours.

Parents and professionals recognise the staff's commitment to creating positive outcomes for the child. The staff, however, have failed to reflect these outcomes in the child's healthcare and education plan. There are no specific health or education objectives, or targets recorded. This limits the effectiveness of the care plan.

The safety of children

The staff manage risks well and keep the child safe. They have created high-quality risk assessments and behaviour management plans that are regularly updated. These outline strategies to manage complex risk-taking behaviours. The staff are aware of the likely triggers and how to use de-escalation techniques effectively.

The staff have close and trusting relationships with the child. They have taken time to understand the child's past experiences and how these relate to harmful behaviours. The staff respond with compassion and patience. This helps the child to learn and reflect on better ways of behaving.

The staff manage safeguarding incidents well. The manager investigates incidents promptly and liaises with the designated officer, social worker and parents. These actions safeguard the child.

A minority of the staff have not undertaken specialist training to understand the child's cognitive needs and care arrangements. This means that some staff may not know how to recognise and manage certain behaviours.

Leaders and managers

The manager has addressed most of the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. She has worked hard to create a positive culture in which the staff work well together as a team. The manager has used technology well to hold regular meetings and ensure that staff maintain good communication. During the lockdown period, the manager increased the frequency of virtual meetings to ensure that the staff had up-to-date information about COVID-19. The staff feel supported by the manager and confident in their roles.

The manager provides strong oversight of all behavioural and safeguarding incidents. Records demonstrate the manager's evaluation and follow-up actions. The manager leads debriefs and discussions with the staff to help them learn from incidents and consider how to improve their practice.

The manager has provided a timely response to complaints. However, one response failed to address all aspects of the complaint. The manager did not acknowledge all aspects of the complaint in her response and did not properly share with the child how their feedback would inform practice at the home.

The location risk assessment lacks analysis. Although there is detail about the area and the local crime rates, this information does not fully inform the care provided. The usefulness of the assessment to help the staff to mitigate external risks is therefore limited.

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. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(i))	28/01/2021
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— Promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(b)(2)(c)(g)(i)(ii))	28/01/2021

Recommendations

- The Care Planning Regulations set out that the responsible local authority (meaning the local authority that looks after the child) must make sure that its looked-after children are provided with appropriate healthcare services. The health of looked-after children must be assessed at regular intervals and the child's care plan must include an individual health plan setting out the approach that the placing authority will follow, and the desired outcomes required to meet the child's health needs. These outcomes, recorded in the health plan, will be the basis on which the registered person will be expected to meet regulation 10(2)(a)(i) in the health and well-being standard for each looked-after child in their care. Details of the local authority's responsibilities for the health of its looked-after children are set out in Children Act 1989: Care planning, placement and case review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.4)

- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2545027

Registered provider: Discovered Limited

Registered provider address: 4-4a Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1HD

Responsible individual: Thomas Mayer

Registered manager: Michelle Jackson

Inspector

Leemya McKeown, Social Care Inspector

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