

2548260

Registered provider: Safe Places for Children UK

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. This home is owned by a private company.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager voluntarily cancelled their registration. The home currently has an interim manager while the provider appoints a new manager.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection date: 16 November 2021

This monitoring visit

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the provider's action against steps in two compliance notices that were issued on 11 October 2021, following a full inspection of the home on 28 September 2021. Requirements set at the full inspection will be considered when the provider is next inspected.

Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the home's leadership and management. An interim manager has been appointed. The interim manager proposes to submit a formal application to Ofsted to resume full responsibility as the registered manager of the home. The manager demonstrated a good understanding, and knowledge, of children who are at risk of child exploitation. Two managers are in post to ensure high levels of scrutiny and that the implementation strategies are strengthened.

A new child is now living at the home and there are no other children living in the home at present. This home is effectively a solo provision at present with a 2:1 staffing ratio. The staffing ratio is in place to manage the risks associated with child sexual and criminal exploitation. As there is no inherent jurisdiction in place that restricts freedom of movement, consideration will need to be given to balance restricting liberty against the risk of going missing from home. A recommendation has been made to address this matter.

Prior to moving in, several multi-agency meetings took place with the placing authority. Consequently, clear and effective communication between the provider and the placing authority helped to ensure a thorough understanding of the presenting needs of the child.

To improve and strengthen internal monitoring and evaluation, a monthly standard report is now utilised. This provides a detailed overview and analysis to track the progress of the child and assess his level of engagement. Improved management oversight ensures that a practice audit is completed throughout the month and checked by the manager. Any shortfalls are quickly identified.

The child is engaging in two hours of home tutoring. Appropriate education facilities are currently being identified. The education tracker details the hours of education completed, but does not cover the subject areas covered. A detailed timetable would help to assure managers that a broad range of education is being delivered. This would also help staff to continue with additional learning by sourcing alternative education opportunities in the wider community.

Online safety training has been completed and there is stringent control regarding mobile phone use. A tracker is in place, but lacks detail of the times the phone is checked and, therefore, lacks clarity to ensure that effective checks have taken place. This is covered in the requirement for protection of children standard.

All staff have completed refresher training to ensure that they have the most up-to-date knowledge and skills to help manage the risks associated with the child. As well as external training providers, managers have been creative and utilised peer-to-peer training, drawing on knowledge, skills and experience amongst the staff team. One example is sharing of knowledge about social media apps. This demonstrates a shared ethos and working together among the team, building confidence within the staff team.

As the home adapts to the changes, and the arrival of a new resident, staff have weekly team meetings. This ensures a consistent and collaborative approach amongst the team. Teamwork and guidance are strengthened, and staff are supported to implement the new strategies. Any anxieties are resolved through team support. Managers have utilised this forum to embed safeguarding procedures, and use safeguarding scenarios to encourage discussion and test the knowledge of the

staff. Managers are keen to improve report writing and recording, and any issues are addressed in supervision.

The staff rota has improved to ensure that there are enough staff on duty each day. A manager is visibly on shift each day. Staff report that they can see a difference with the new management structures and report confidence of the team. Staff feel supported under the new management structure. One staff member said, 'I now enjoy coming to work, the atmosphere is so much better.'

Risk management plans have been streamlined and are now much clearer. The plans have not been fully tested as the child has only been in placement for a short period. One missing-from-care incident occurred shortly after the child moved in. Swift action was taken by the manager to ensure tighter risk management for missing-from-care procedures and a revisor to staff to follow the correct protocol.

Key-work sessions are detailed, and the overall quality has improved. The child is consulted following each team meeting and is actively encouraged to contribute his views. He actively participates in child review meetings and child strategy meetings. Through creative consultation, the child has co-produced his own contracts for wi-fi usage, empowering him to make decisions around his own safety plan. Key-work sessions to address sexualised behaviour, and what is considered appropriate touch, set out clear expectations and boundaries.

The inspector was able to speak with the child, who said that he enjoyed living at the home. He liked his room and said that the staff were nice. We discussed his understanding of risk factors of him going missing and he said that he had been spoken to about this by staff. This demonstrates that staff have had conversations with the child to ensure that he is kept safe and that he understands risk-taking behaviour. Due to the high staffing ratio, the child discussed feeling restricted with his movements and that sometimes he would like to go for a walk on his own. We discussed his cultural needs and he reported that 'staff are doing their best'.

The inspector was able to speak with the child's independent reviewing officer and social work manager who were attending a child looked after review meeting. Neither expressed any concerns with the placement. Although early days in placement, the child has settled in and is forming good attachments with staff. Communication between the home and placing authority is good. Several multi-agency meetings have taken place to ensure that there is ongoing review and robust planning to manage the risks.

Following the monitoring visit, a case review was held which considered the compliance notices to have been met. The home will receive a reinspection during the inspection cycle.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date
28/09/2021

Inspection type
Full

Inspection judgement
Inadequate

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 registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))	31 January 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— 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;	31 January 2022

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; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(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 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;	31 January 2022

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; 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)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	
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; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child’s education or training provider and the child’s placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access	31 January 2022

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; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))	
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— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; 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; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care;	31 January 2022

help each child to understand how the child's privacy will be respected and the circumstances when it may have to be limited;

help each child to prepare for any review of the child's relevant plans and to make the child's views, wishes and feelings known for the purposes of that review; and

make each child aware of and, if necessary, remind them of each of the matters in sub-paragraph (d)(i) to (iii);

ensure that each child—

is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about and services that the child receives;

has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home; and is given appropriate advocacy support;

keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document.

(Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c)

(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Recommendations

- The registered person should balance the restriction of liberty against the risk of going missing from home, as there is no inherent jurisdiction in place that restricts freedom of movement. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the standards', page 50, paragraph 9.63)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2548260

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Safe Places for Children UK

Registered provider address: First Floor, Triad House, Mountbatten Court, Worrall Street, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 1DT

Responsible individual: Jamie Joinson

Registered manager: Lorraine Aston-Donley

Inspector

Kamal Bhamra, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021