

2548260

Safe Places for Children UK

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children who may experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

There is currently no registered manager in post.

Inspection date: 18 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This visit took place following two separate safeguarding notifications involving both young people residing in the home. The visit was conducted off site, utilising meetings set up via video link. Requested documentation was promptly sent to the inspector. Both young people declined the opportunity to speak with the inspector.

Since opening as a children's home, there have been several changes in leadership and management. The home has not had a registered manager in post since July 2020. The current acting manager is required to submit his formal application to Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate (HMCI) in a timely manner. A requirement has been made to address this matter.

The unstable period has had an impact on staff in managing children with challenging behaviours. Under the new manager, staff report a supportive environment and an opportunity to grow and develop in their roles. Staff identify transferrable skills to manage challenging behaviour. However, some staff do not have direct experience of managing children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Additional training is recommended to address the shortfalls in practice for staff and the acting manager. A recommendation has been made to address this matter.

Impact assessments when matching children together require scrutiny to minimise negative impact on children. A recommendation has been made to address this matter.

Managers are focused on building positive relationships with children. This is particularly important for children who are new to the home. Managers have been creative in their approach and have organised pamper evenings for staff and children. Simple events have a positive impact on everyone as they help to raise morale, build positive attachments and create a jovial atmosphere. Staff provide, and engage in, arts and crafts with children who have a creative flair. This is significant during the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic as normal day-to-day leisure and/or enjoyable activities in the community have been hindered by national lockdown restrictions.

All children have individual risk assessments. Critical information reports have separate headings that allow staff to use the document as a reflective tool and evaluate their actions. Positive identity helps children to develop a better sense of self, improve self-confidence and self-worth. Although behaviour support plans identify management of behaviours, they do not identify identity as a major catalyst and/or contributor to an increase in incidents.

The inspector identified a breach in regulations following a serious safeguarding notification. Children with known histories of child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation were not fully safeguarded. Child sexual exploitation risk assessments were written retrospectively, thus failing to raise concerns until after the event. Senior managers lacked professional curiosity to wider associated friendship groups and did not identify associated risks. A requirement has been raised to address this matter. In addition, staff and senior managers would benefit from further training and development in child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation risk management.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not previously inspected		

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))	30 April 2021
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;	30 April 2021

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(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 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;	30 April 2021

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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the behaviour management strategy is understood and applied at all times by staff and is kept under review and revised where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should seek to establish a diverse staff team with a range of interests, skills and experiences. They should lead staff to share those interests, skills and experiences with children to enrich the children's lives. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.6)

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: Natalie Kennedy

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kamal Bhamra, Social Care Inspector

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