

2548571

Worcestershire Children First

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home was previously owned by the local authority. It was re-registered in October 2019 when the local authority moved to be a holding company. It is registered for up to four children who have learning disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2019 is working towards a leadership and management qualification at level 5.

Inspection dates: 22–23 July 2020

This monitoring visit

This inspection took place following a safeguarding concern being shared with the regulator.

Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspectors only spent a short period of time physically visiting the home and then carried on the inspection remotely. The inspectors gathered evidence in several different ways, including by talking to managers, members of staff, and children living at the home. The registered manager also provided electronic documents for the inspectors to review.

The registered manager ensures that prompt referrals are made when concerns are raised. However, some members of staff are far too slow in sharing their concerns. This creates unnecessary delay in children being safeguarded. Some of these referrals have not been shared with the independent visitor or Ofsted as required.

On occasion, sanctions are given to children to help them to change their behaviours. However, there is insufficient management oversight of these to ensure they are being used effectively.

Considerable work has been carried out to improve the home's environment. For example, the sensory garden and sensory room have been improved. This has provided children with a homelier environment. However, the same level of care has not been given to addressing an unpleasant odour and the overall cleanliness of the children's bathrooms.

On occasions, staff need to lock internal doors to help ensure that children are safe. However, there is inconsistency around when and how staff are applying this rule.

The staff training matrix shows that not all staff are up to date with receiving essential training. For example, a number of staff have not received training in caring for children who have a learning disability and managing children's health conditions.

Further shortfalls were identified during the inspection. For example, some staff are not signing children's records, as required. Furthermore, staff are using their own mobile phones to help them to educate children and to download pictures to support communication.

Senior management oversight of the service has not been sufficiently strong to get a full understanding of the strengths of the home and the shortfalls in practice. As a result, managers have at times been too slow to prevent shortfalls, identify weaknesses and take decisive and effective action to rectify them.

More positively, children enjoy a sound relationship with the staff. Children are also looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in promoting the children's welfare and well-being. This includes staff receiving regular reflective supervision.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
No Inspection		

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii))	10/09/2020
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— 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.	10/09/2020

(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))	
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(h)) This is specially in regard to the senior leadership team ensuring that effective monitoring systems are in place.	10/09/2020
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	10/09/2020
The registered person must ensure that—	10/09/2020

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— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of 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; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This is specifically regarding sanctions given to children.	
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which—	10/09/2020

include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(c))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	10/09/2020
The registered person must use reasonable endeavours to ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(b))	10/09/2020

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.

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that COVID-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of COVID-19 by the home. This has included the effect these have had on staffing arrangements.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2548571

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Registered provider address: Worcestershire Children First, County Hall Campus, Spetchley Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 2NP

Responsible individual: Adam Johnston

Registered manager: Nina Kersho

Inspectors

Louise Battersby, social care inspector

Mrs Dawn Bennett, social care inspector

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