

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 wholly owned limited company. It is registered for up to four children with learning disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2019 and holds the level 5 diploma in leadership and management.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection date: 22 September 2021

This monitoring visit

The home was judged inadequate at the last full inspection, on 3 and 4 August 2021. As a result of the concerns identified at the full inspection, three compliance notices were issued, in relation to regulation 12, regulation 13 and regulation 32 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. In addition, a notice restricting accommodation was issued. Eight requirements were also made.

This visit examined the progress made by the home in meeting the three compliance notices and the notice restricting accommodation. The inspectors found that the compliance notices had been met. The notice restricting accommodation was also complied with and lifted as a result of this inspection. Two requirements have been restated and one new recommendation has been made as a result of the visit.

The registered manager and staff have undertaken considerable work to improve the home environment. The home is now welcoming, warm and homely. Redecoration has taken place in several areas of the home, and children have had their say in how the home is decorated. This helps children feel valued and proud of their home.

Leaders and managers have ensured that the home is sufficiently staffed. As a result, there are now enough staff to meet the complex needs of the children.

Children's safety is no longer compromised. The registered manager has been clear that staff locking themselves and children in rooms to protect children from volatile situations, is not an acceptable risk management strategy. Because there are now enough staff, staff are able to de-escalate potentially difficult situations, which has led to fewer incidents. When incidents do occur, there has been effective oversight from managers. As a result, children are provided with more positive experiences and are supported to feel safe.

A child has needed to be restrained on one occasion. The restraint record included clear information and debriefs were held with the child and staff. A manager's oversight of this record was also evident. One child's behaviour management plan has been updated to reflect that ground holds should not be used for this individual child. If ground holds are required, information about why this is will be detailed in children's plans. Staff have completed refresher training in restraint. This improved practice supports children's safety and welfare.

The registered manager has introduced an array of monitoring tools to support her oversight of the care provided to children. This includes actions plans, monitoring forms and other tools to support her oversight of children's care and progress. These systems help the manager to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the service and she has plans in place to develop this further.

Since the full inspection, the manager has taken action to update training records. Staff told inspectors that they had attended a variety of training courses since the last inspection and staff were attending training on the day of the visit. Training records have been updated effectively and it is clear that staff have the necessary skills to keep children safe. The requirement raised in relation to staff not having obtained their level 3 qualification was not reviewed as part of this visit.

The registered manager has ensured that she has effective oversight of risk assessments and children's behaviour management plans. As a result, staff now have clearer guidance about how to manage risk to children. Behaviour management plans are clear about when and how children should be restrained. The manager has consulted with other professionals and it is clear that they have been involved in the review process. Despite these improvements, inspectors found that on one record the language used in a risk assessment was not clear and open to interpretation and in one record not all risk management strategies used were included. A recommendation is raised to support ongoing improvement in this area.

Since the full inspection, the registered manager has ensured greater scrutiny of recruitment records. During this visit, inspectors found that recruitment was safe. However, the manager was not able to easily obtain all of the information required and this took some time. The manager would benefit from improved systems to

ensure that recruitment information is well organised to mitigate the risk of information being lost.

Managers and leaders have made attempts to update the rota to make sure it is clear and easily understood. However, there are still omissions. For example, it is not always clear which agency staff are working each day. As a result, the requirement raised at the last inspection in respect of this remains.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	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 person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that staff who have not completed the level 3 qualification in the required timescale are supported to do so as soon as practicable.	28 November 2021
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.	5 November 2021

The registered person must—

maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;

ensure that the records are kept up to date; and

retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))

This particularly refers to ensuring that staff rosters include information about which agency staff work in the home and when.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, includes details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, risk assessments should include all risk management strategies that are in place for children and language used is recorded in a way that is clear and helpful to staff and children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: 2548571

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Registered provider address: County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP

Responsible individual: Justine Bishop

Registered manager: Nina Kersho

Inspectors

Natasha Skinner, Social Care Inspector

Louise Battersby, Social Care Inspector

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