

2548794

Registered provider: Seva Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in July 2020 and is privately run. It provides care for up to five children with learning difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home.

The post for a registered manager has been vacant since October 2023. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

During the visit, the inspector was aware that an allegation against staff was under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, the inspector considered the actions the home has taken in response to the incident, alongside other relevant evidence available to them.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 15 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/05/2023	Full	Good
29/06/2022	Full	Good
10/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Weaknesses in safeguarding practice undermine children's safety and welfare. This has led to an inadequate inspection judgement.

On one occasion, a child was able to leave the house despite requiring two-to-one supervision during the day and one to one supervision at night. Staff did not take effective action at the time and failed to inform managers and the appropriate agencies of the incident. The child was found by a member of the public, who contacted the police. This incident was not recorded on the home's recording system to ensure that appropriate actions were followed. Information about this incident was provided by the police during this inspection.

Children have positive relationships with staff. Warm, playful interactions were observed between children and staff during the inspection. Staff are knowledgeable about the children's individual interests. They have the necessary skills to communicate with children and use various verbal and non-verbal communication methods.

Children's health and education needs are met well. All children are registered with local services and receive treatment when required. All children are engaging in education and making good progress. One child, who initially struggled to attend health appointments, now attends, and engages in routine health checks. Staff use social stories effectively to prepare children for their appointments.

Children are supported to maintain positive relationships with their families. One parent said that managers assisted the family with their travel costs to visit their child following delays from the placing authority. Staff work closely with children and their families to ensure that the time they spend together is enjoyable.

Children enjoy a range of activities in the home and in the community. These include visiting attractions in central London and regularly going swimming. Children benefit from having good routines and structure to their day. Children are given opportunities to have new experiences in the community. Some children who initially struggled to use public transport are now able to use it.

The home is well maintained and suitable for children. Children's bedrooms are personalised, and the living area is welcoming, homely, and spacious.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Safeguarding practices in the home are inadequate and have placed children at risk. Not all staff are vigilant when caring for vulnerable children who need constant support and supervision. Staff's response when a child was missing from the home did not

demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills, and ability to respond to serious incidents to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect children.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that staffing levels at night meet the children's complex needs and their required level of supervision. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has not been met.

Risk assessments are detailed and identify known risks. However, not all assessments are regularly updated to address potential risks or reflect changes in the children's needs. Staff could not provide one child's risk assessment that was requested during this inspection.

Managers do not have regular access to staff signing-in records to monitor staff rotas and ensure that the day-to-day staffing arrangements are adequate. These records were requested but could not be provided at the inspection. This prevents managers from identifying who has been working with children and undermines the effectiveness of any potential child protection investigations.

Safer recruitment and employment practices ensure that staff are safely recruited. This prevents unsuitable people from working at the home and helps to promote the children's safety. However, leaders and managers do not consistently explore the reasons for new staff ending previous employment, including positions when they have worked with children and vulnerable adults.

Feedback from the local authority designated officer (LADO) is positive. The LADO said that leaders and managers respond to allegations against staff promptly and work well with other agencies. Many placing authorities and parents spoke positively about the care provided to children and communication from staff. However, one placing authority reported that staff do not consistently respond to the social worker's messages. In addition, leaders and managers do not regularly share information about internal investigations against staff members with other placing authorities. This was raised as a requirement at the last inspection and has not been met.

Staff understand when children are not happy and respond swiftly. As a result, children feel listened to. Staff set boundaries and routines for children, which promotes and encourages positive behaviour. The consistent approach to behaviour management is reducing the number of incidents in the home, including physical restraints, which have significantly reduced since the last inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leadership and management of the home have been judged inadequate because leaders and managers have failed to evidence that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to respond to serious safeguarding incidents. Furthermore, several requirements made at the last inspection have not been met and are restated.

Leaders and managers do not have effective systems to monitor the home and the quality of care that children receive. Managers and staff failed to share important records requested during this inspection. Documents included risk assessments, staff induction information and evidence of staff signing-in records when working in the home.

The new manager of the home is not supervised regularly in line with the statement of purpose. A lack of regular supervision reduces opportunities for leaders and managers to monitor how effectively the home is being run and how well children are safeguarded. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and remains unmet.

Staff said that they feel well supported by leaders and managers. Team meetings demonstrate that staff can reflect on their practice and children's needs. Staff also benefit from fortnightly in-house clinical psychologist support to help them understand the children's needs. Staff benefit from regular supervision, which covers a broad agenda. However, staff appraisals do not show evidence of staff participation, their views and reflection on their practice.

Due to the concerns raised at this inspection, one compliance notice has been issued.

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, The 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 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; 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; 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; 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)(f)(h)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to provide safe and effective care to children.	25 August 2024

Leaders and managers must have systems in place to have effective oversight of staff practice in the home. They must ensure that staffing levels reflect assessed risks at night.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that all children’s social workers are informed of any concerns and allegations against staff in the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	25 August 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff and managers receive supervision in line with the home’s statement of purpose. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	25 August 2024
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;	25 August 2024

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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(e)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to swiftly record and report serious incidents to all relevant stakeholders, including Ofsted. Leaders and managers must ensure that all potential risks are thoroughly assessed and planned for. Leaders and managers must ensure that clear and accurate records are kept that account for any changes in staffing on shifts.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they maintain good employment practice and explore the reasons for staff ending previous employment, particularly when staff have worked with children or vulnerable adults. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised. This appraisal should consider, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member. Staff should contribute to their appraisal to reflect on their role. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that records are kept efficiently and are organised to allow for appropriate access and monitoring. In particular, they should ensure that all children's records are updated in a timely manner and placed on their files. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 14.2)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2548794

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Seva Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: 71 to 75 Shelton Street, London WC2H 9JQ

Responsible individual: Mahesh Kotecha

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector

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