

2549726

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides short breaks for children with learning disabilities and can care for up to four children on any one night.

The manager was appointed in September 2021 and is yet to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 12 January 2022

This monitoring visit

On 23 and 24 November 2021, a full inspection was carried out and the home was judged inadequate due to significant concerns regarding the safety of children.

This visit was carried out to monitor the provider's progress towards the compliance notice, which was issued in relation to regulation 12, the protection of children standard. While undertaking this visit, the inspector also monitored the provider's progress towards the other requirements and recommendations that were raised at the full inspection.

The inspector found that the provider had worked hard to meet most of the requirements of the compliance notice. However, they had not fully met all aspects of the notice; therefore, it was reissued. In addition, the provider has not met the four requirements and one recommendation from the previous inspection, and these have been restated.

Staff have now received safeguarding training specific to children with disabilities. Managers have put in place new guidance to inform staff about how to report concerns. They have also introduced quizzes in team meetings to test staff's understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Consequently, staff's knowledge and skills have improved, and they are better equipped to recognise risks and keep children safe.

However, children's risk assessments and behaviour plans remain insufficient. They still do not identify all the risks or provide sufficient information on the strategies staff should use to reduce the risks to children or manage their behaviours. These omissions could result in inconsistent care from staff and increase the risk of harm to children or others.

Children's care plans are improving and becoming more personalised. Managers have introduced a new format, and they have reviewed children's plans. As a result, plans provide staff with improved guidance on how to help children to progress. This is still a work in progress and is yet to be fully implemented.

Staff have an improved understanding of children's health needs relating to their epilepsy. Managers have reviewed children's epilepsy plans and they are now much more detailed. As a result, staff are now more informed about each child's epilepsy and the action to take if they have a seizure. However, further information is needed on the timeframes of when to monitor the children when they are not with staff, such as during the night. Consequently, children could be at risk from unobserved seizures.

Managers have been proactive and creative in sourcing a wide variety of training for staff. Some training sessions have already been completed. This has improved staff's knowledge in areas such as caring for children with an autism spectrum disorder and communicating with children with a disability. Further training is planned to ensure that staff can meet the needs of all children who use the service.

Staff now help children to understand what to do if there was a fire. Staff have made sure all children have undertaken a fire evacuation practice. Children's personal emergency evacuation plans are now individualised. Managers have been creative in helping children understand where they need to go during an evacuation. They have painted footprints on the car park, showing the way, and provided reflective strips at the assembly point. Additionally, in the home's car, they have made sure that there is a bag that has blankets, water, and biscuits. As a result, children are better prepared for the event of a fire.

Managers have now risk assessed the use of bedroom door alarms for all children. Consequently, restrictions are only in place when necessary to keep children safe.

This home has now been without a registered manager for 20 weeks. The current manager has been in post since September 2021 and has not yet registered with Ofsted.

The monitoring and oversight of the quality of care by the senior leaders and the managers have greatly improved. The newly appointed responsible individual has been present in the home and is supporting the manager to make improvements to the quality of care children receive. This remains a work in progress and further improvement is required to meet all of the requirements issued at the last inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/11/2021	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 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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(ii)(iv)(vi)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that children's plans are personalised, regularly reviewed, help children to develop skills and that staff understand those plans. This requirement was issued at the previous inspection and is restated.	13 March 2022
* The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	13 March 2022

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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring robust plans are in place to safeguard children, such as risk assessments and behaviour management plans. This requirement was issued at the previous inspection and is restated.	
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;	13 March 2022

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) This specifically relates to epilepsy plans being clear about when and how often to make checks on children. In addition, that there is consideration to dignity and privacy when using visual and audio monitoring.	
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; 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)(c)(f)(h))	13 March 2022

This specifically relates to managers ensuring that staff receive and understand all the training they need to care for the children accessing the service. This also relates to ensuring that managers understand how the quality of care has an impact on children's progress, experiences and safety. Managers should use robust monitoring systems to improve the service and ensure that staff work as a team. This requirement was issued at the previous inspection and is restated.	
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b)) This specifically relates to the responsible individual having oversight of the manager and making sure that the manager is ensuring compliance with the regulations. This requirement was issued at the previous inspection and is restated.	13 March 2022
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)) In particular, the appointed manager must register with Ofsted.	1 March 2022

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff support children to wear appropriate clothing for the weather, such as socks when it is cold and wet outside. This recommendation was issued at the previous inspection and is restated. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

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: 2549726

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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