

2555505

Aspiration House Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 12 children who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, and/or atypical autism, learning disabilities, global development disorder and associated difficulties.

The home was registered by Ofsted in April 2020. Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, a full inspection has not been carried out to date.

An assurance visit was carried out in December 2020. Serious and widespread concerns were identified at this visit. An immediate suspension notice was issued on 18 December 2020. The suspension notice was made until 12 March 2021. All three children who were living at the home at that time were moved to alternative homes.

The registered manager has been registered since April 2020.

Inspection date: 4 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was carried out to review the progress made by the provider, in relation to the shortfalls found at the assurance visit and in response to the suspension of registration. The work was undertaken remotely. Staff and managers were spoken to via telephone and video calls. The inspector was provided with a range of documents to consider as part of the monitoring visit.

The electronic recording system will no longer be used in the home. Managers have decided to remove this and implement a paper-based recording system in its place. As there are no children currently living at the home, it has not been possible to consider the new case records system for children.

Changes are proposed in relation to the model of restraint practices used in the home. New training is being provided by an external provider. There is insufficient evidence of the manager having fully considered and analysed records relating to

restraint and risk assessments from last year. A formal review of behaviour management practice in the home is hampered by the fact that not all incidents of restraint were recorded. To date, there is no clear sense of how this practice emerged or why there was insufficient management oversight of physical restraint and behaviour management. There is a lack of organisational learning from the events leading to the suspension of the home's registration. This learning is essential in ensuring that children will be safely cared for in the future.

Some work has been carried out to correct and complete previous restraint records. This includes staff debriefs and management oversight. However, one record considered during this monitoring visit stated that a debrief was carried out with a child weeks after they moved from the home. Another restraint record does not refer to debriefing an agency member of staff who restrained a child without the appropriate training. Amending restraint records retrospectively carries a risk to the integrity of the documents.

Further work is needed to fully understand the reasons for the significant shortfalls in practice found at the assurance visit. Staff are being provided with training, some of which is refresher training. Ofsted is not confident that training alone will ensure that there is no repeat of practice shortfalls. Improvement is needed in restraint practice and recording. Improvement is also needed in recording and reviewing children's risk assessments and behaviour management plans. Robust and timely management oversight of these records is not evident. This exposes children to risk.

The registered manager has just carried out the first quality of care review and report for the home. This should be completed at least every six months and a copy sent to Ofsted. The version seen during this visit was dated 27 January 2021. It did not include sufficient consideration, analysis or evaluation of the serious and widespread concerns found at the assurance visit. There is no action plan or sense of what areas management will need to consider moving forward.

A new independent visitor has been appointed since the assurance visit. A visit was made to the home in January 2021. The report from that visit does not consider the actions set from the previous regulation 44 visits. The independent visitor has not considered or reported on the specific concerns arising from the assurance visit. The visitor did not speak with any staff during the visit, only managers. This is a missed opportunity to improve the quality of care in the home.

The previous responsible individual resigned from their position following the assurance visit. A new responsible individual came into post in January 2021. The registered manager has relinquished her other roles within the organisation, and she is now focused on being in day-to-day charge of the home and making the necessary improvements.

All referrals relating to allegations about staff have now been made to the designated officer for their consideration. Relevant notifications have been shared with Ofsted since the assurance visit.

Managers have reviewed and updated the children's guide. They have produced a child-friendly complaints procedure. An updated admissions checklist sets out what information is to be given to children when they move into the home.

Managers have reviewed and updated the statement of purpose for the home. It now includes details of all staff, and a copy has been sent to Ofsted.

A wide range of training courses have been provided for staff since the last visit. Staff feel that the new training has been of a high quality and will assist them in their roles. Staff have said that they receive regular formal supervision as well as informal support from managers in the home. Staff feel that they have been well supported by managers during recent difficult times.

The requirements from the assurance visit were considered at this visit. Some requirements have been met. Others have been repeated and will be considered at the next monitoring visit. A new recommendation has been made in relation to management monitoring and reviews.

Recent inspection history

The home has not yet been 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 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	28 February 2021

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 procedures. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(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 their full potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to - 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 - feedback on the experience of children, including complaints received; and use of monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	28 February 2021
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which - include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;	28 February 2021

are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author for each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out the visit, the registered person must help the independent person - if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and 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. The independent person may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (5))	28 February 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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 assurance visit in December 2020, when an immediate suspension notice was issued.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2555505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspiration House Ltd

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, 9 Portland Street, Manchester M1 3BE

Responsible individual: Deborah Carr

Registered manager: Helen Whittleton

Inspector

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector

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