

2557064

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It provides care for up to two children who experience social and emotional difficulties and have learning difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2020, and the manager registered in November 2024.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home.

Inspection date: 7 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 14 August 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

The home environment is not suitable to meet the child's needs. The child's bedroom window and window restrictor have been broken since before the child moved into the home. As a result, there is a large gap between the window and the frame in the child's bedroom. The ability to lock or restrict windows forms part of the child's deprivation of liberty order (DLO). Therefore, staff are unable to implement and comply with the requirements of the order.

Furthermore, some parts of the home environment are poor and require repair, redecoration and cleaning. Windows are broken, areas of the home need to be painted and some areas of the home are not clean. Action was taken to address the shortfalls in the home environment during the inspection.

During the inspection, the child said that they have observed members of staff to use their vaping devices while on duty, which is contrary to the home's policy. The policy relating to this issue is unclear, and there is a lack of effective management oversight of this behaviour. Leaders and managers addressed this during the inspection.

The manager completes a six-month quality of care review. This includes the wishes and feelings of the child and key stakeholders.

Transitions in and out of the home are poorly managed. Leaders and managers do not fully consider children's needs and risks before they move into the home. This contributed to one child's poor experience of moving on from the home, and staff were unable to meet the child's needs effectively. Another child moved into the home when there was limited oversight from leaders and managers due to them being on annual leave.

Leaders and managers review records and ensure that the placing authority documents are followed. However, there are shortfalls in the information contained in some of the risk assessments, and it is unclear if staff have read and understood them. The child's risk assessments do not include sufficient information about all known risks and vulnerabilities or the strategies to manage and reduce risks.

Some staff members lack the relevant experience and expertise for their role. This compromises the quality of care provided. Staff do not clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Some staff members are relatively new to the sector and lack the skills to manage the complex needs of the child effectively. One junior member of staff was left on their own with the child on Christmas day. This is contrary to the two-to-one staffing ratios stated in the child's DLO. Furthermore, not all staff understand what is required of them in relation to meeting the child's DLO.

Leaders and managers do not respond appropriately to, or implement, appropriate and safe strategies to protect children living in the home. Staff do not have sufficient guidance or supervision to ensure that they are able to manage and reduce the risks to children.

There is no demonstrated learning from safeguarding incidents, and incidents are not always recorded. There is no reflection with staff or robust evaluation of safeguarding incidents to improve the safety and welfare of children and the practices of staff.

Team meetings and staff supervision are not held regularly. This means that staff are not suitably supported and able to discuss any concerns they have.

The new manager has responded to previous requirements and has made improvements since the previous inspection. However, there are several requirements and recommendations made at this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/01/2024	Full	Good
23/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/05/2022	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, 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; 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are suitably experienced and competent to work with children and ensure that staff are given responsibilities in line with their experience. This also includes ensuring there is adequate staffing to fulfil the requirements of the placement plan. This requirement is restated.	23 February 2025
*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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they are able to fulfil any requirements of a deprivation of liberty	23 February 2025

safeguard order before admitting a child. This is specifically in relation to being able to lock windows and doors should this be required in line with an order. Also, the registered person must ensure that the accommodation is suitable for children to live in. This specifically relates to windows and doors. Also, the registered person must ensure that any staff personal equipment or items which present an increased risk to the child, such as vapes and associated products, are locked away or not brought onto site. Also, the registered person must ensure that any incidents occurring in the home are recorded clearly and concisely, including action taken, and that any debriefs are completed with the children involved and that the regulator is kept informed.	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation; and provide each employee with a job description outlining the employee’s responsibilities. The registered person must operate a disciplinary procedure which, in particular— provides for the suspension from work of an employee if necessary in the interests of the safety or welfare of children; and provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, whether past or present, in relation to a child to the appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted. For the purposes of this regulation, “the appropriate person” is the registered person, an officer of HMCI, an officer of the local authority in whose area the home is located or a police officer.	23 February 2025

The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that supervisions take place regularly and in line with the statement of purpose.	
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)) In particular, this relates to the registered person ensuring that the home is well maintained to a high standard and any damage or maintenance issues are identified and rectified in a timely manner.	23 February 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.	23 February 2025

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must only accept children when they are able to meet their needs and ensure that there is sufficient management oversight in the absence of the registered person.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. This includes risk assessments and behaviour support plans for the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2557064

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 5 Crescent East, Hardhorn Road, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 3LJ

Responsible individual: Mandy Teale

Registered manager: Bethany Culshaw

Inspector

James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

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