

2557064

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in August 2020 and 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 post for a registered manager has been vacant since 2 December 2023. A new manager has been appointed.

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

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 30 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2024	Full	Good
23/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The child has lived at the home for over two years. This means that they have a secure base where they feel settled. The child says that they would like to continue living in the home once they have reached 16 years old. There are clear signs that the child has good relationships with some staff and feels comfortable asking for help and support.

The child has a positive relationship with the staff who care for them. The child engages in some positive key-work sessions to discuss topics relating to their life. However, this is not consistent, and significant concerns raised in relation to the child's safeguarding needs are not always escalated effectively. This means that the child is not receiving the additional specialist support needed, and some of their needs remain unmet.

The child said that the multiple changes in staffing and management have contributed to them feeling overwhelmed and in some cases has made their diagnosed health needs worse. Leaders and managers accept that there have been shortfalls in the overall management of the home due to management changes and having a relatively new staff team. This means that the child is supported by people who are not always known to them. This also means that new members of staff are not always able to provide the same consistent approach to support the child to manage their behaviours.

Staff support the child to spend time with their family and the people who are important to them. Staff maintain regular communication with family members and keep them updated about the child. This helps the child to maintain their identity and continue to see the people who are important to them.

The staff are proactive in supporting the child to engage in education. This has helped the child to access alternative provision for part of their school week, and they have now started a local provision that is more suited to their needs. This flexibility enables the child to explore subjects of interest which are more appropriate to them.

The child has developed their independence skills while living in the home. Therefore, they are better prepared to move on to semi-independent living, which is their chosen pathway. The child is now able to budget, shop and cook meals. They also ensure that they keep their home space clean and tidy.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff only use physical intervention techniques as an absolute last resort to safeguard children. There have been no incidents of physical restraint since the last inspection.

The home environment was found to be unsafe during the inspection. The home requires maintenance work and decoration. There is broken glass in the rear yard and potential electrical hazards, such as unsecured plug sockets and broken security lighting hanging from the wall outside. Health and safety checks have failed to identify the damage and disrepair which pose a hazard.

Leaders and managers report serious incidents to Ofsted so that the regulator has oversight of the action taken by staff to keep children safe. However, there has been a delay in managers notifying Ofsted of some incidents. This compromises the regulator's oversight of the home and its safeguarding practice.

Behaviour support plans include detailed steps for staff to take to help them to understand triggers for incidents and how to de-escalate incidents wherever possible. Staff use praise and effective de-escalation techniques to ensure that they do not have to use physical intervention techniques. Children are offered the opportunity to discuss any potential uses of physical intervention in their support plans.

Missing-from-home protocols are clear and comprehensive. Therefore, when children go missing from home, they receive a coordinated and consistent response. However, not all children receive an effective debrief or return home interview. This means that children are not able to share their views or discuss the potential triggers which lead them to go missing from home. This compromises the management oversight and analysis of any known locations children are when they are missing or the reasons why children go missing from home.

The home uses the PACE model of care. However, staff do not fully understand this approach. As a result, children may not be provided with consistent approaches to care.

Recruitment procedures and practices are safe and effective. All staff are vetted before starting work. These checks ensure that only suitable adults are employed to work with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted. They are passionate and ambitious about the home and have positive plans to develop staff and processes in the home. The new manager is aware of the home's areas for development and is already working towards making improvements.

Staff say that they feel supported by the new manager. They say that the new manager has brought a more organised and consistent approach to the home. One member of staff said that the manager has really helped them through a difficult period.

The monitoring and review systems at the home are generally effective. This helps leaders and managers to identify the home's strengths and areas for development, to ensure that action is taken to address any shortfalls.

When staff move between homes in the organisation, their induction progress is not monitored, which means that their practice and progress are not clearly assessed or recorded. However, the registered manager undertakes some practice checks, such as medication competency.

Staff do not always have regular supervision and team meetings. This limits their ability to share their concerns or feelings in relation to the support they offer to the child in the home. However, when supervision sessions and team meetings take place, they are comprehensive and a positive experience for staff.

Not all staff have received training to enhance their skills and knowledge to help them to understand and meet the child's individual needs. For example, some staff have not received training on topics such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Furthermore, not all staff have received training relating to recording and reporting. This compromises staff's ability to provide consistent care and support to the child.

The quality of care review report does not evaluate or analyse the child's achievements and progress they are making. The report does not include or evaluate the opinions of children, their parents and the placing authorities. This is a missed opportunity to help the leaders and managers to evaluate the quality of care effectively.

Staff do not consistently sign and date paperwork and care plans, which undermines accountability and compromises follow up in the event of serious incidents.

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
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; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they escalate any concerns with the child's placing authority and ensure that appropriate action is taken and/or referrals are made to services without delay.	25 October 2024
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	25 October 2024

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 all staff receive timely mandatory and child-specific training. This requirement 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 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 the home is safe for children to live in and that any hazards are identified and rectified without delay.	25 October 2024
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review	25 October 2024

report”). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children’s home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that any person appointed completes their registration paperwork without delay and that changes are minimised to reduce the impact on children’s well-being.	25 October 2024
The registered person must—	25 October 2024

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.

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 induction, team meetings and supervision sessions take place regularly and in line with the home's statement of purpose.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that independent return home interviews and full debriefs are carried out with children in line with statutory guidance following any period when they go missing from home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.25)

- The registered person should ensure that Ofsted is notified without delay if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs, specifically in relation to the home's statement of purpose and model of care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2557064

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Andrea Cox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

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