

2557064

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

The manager registered in April 2022.

Following the inadequate inspection in May 2022, a monitoring visit was completed on 28 June 2022. A copy of the report is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 August 2022

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: 10 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
16/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home. The child liked the home and had made several friends in the area. A family member said that the child receives a good level of care.

The home is tidy and well presented. However, the backyard is not a comfortable space for children and staff to enjoy. The child has asked the staff to help to keep their bedroom tidy. This support would help the child to feel nurtured and cared for. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

The child now goes to school after a long period of non-attendance. The child is due to start a new school in the autumn term that supports their learning needs. School staff report no concerns with communication between the home and the education provider.

The child's education and healthcare plan outlines the child's early experiences of trauma and attachment issues and how these affect the child. Managers and staff do not have a good understanding of attachment theory and how this may affect children's behaviour and their ability to form secure bonds with their carers.

Staff meet the child's health needs and make sure that the child is registered with local health services. The child and adolescent mental health team offers support for the child's emotional well-being. Staff continue to support the therapeutic work through planned key-work sessions. The overall quality of key-work sessions is good.

Staff ensure that the child has enjoyable and positive experiences, including activities such as outdoor activities, swimming and boxing.

The child is most vulnerable in the evening and has gone missing from care late at night. Changes in the staff team and insufficient staff on duty at night, including solo male staff on duty, have not helped the child to feel secure in the home.

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

Behaviour management strategies are now linked to the placement plan. Plans identify strategies to help the staff to manage incidents. Incidents in the home are minimal, and there are no reported incidents requiring physical intervention.

Risk management plans have improved. However, risk assessments and risk management strategies do not take account of all the risks that the child may be

exposed to. Therefore, risk assessments require improvement to ensure that all the risks are fully assessed. A requirement is made to cover areas that require improvement.

The manager did not complete a risk assessment regarding a dog leash that the child has in their bedroom. The child kept the dog leash as a memento for rescuing a dog. An assessment of this risk is necessary, considering the child's history of self-harm and the use of ligatures.

The local authority placement plan identifies that the child has a history of contacting unfamiliar adults through social media. Consequently, the child is vulnerable on social media. The child hands in their electronic tablet and gaming handset to staff at night. However, staff are not vigilant in checking devices to ensure that the child is safe online.

Missing-from-care documents are updated when the child is missing from care. Managers and staff do not understand trends or triggers that may contribute to the pattern of the child going missing from care at a particular time of night. The age and emotional presentation of the child increase their vulnerability when the child leaves the home at night. The missing-from-care protocol is unclear about when staff should report the child missing. Due to staff shortages, and only one staff member being on waking night duty, the child is not reported missing from care to the police in a timely manner.

Wider professional relationships require strengthening to improve safeguarding and multi-agency practice to ensure the overall safety and well-being of the child. Leaders and managers are not aware of safeguarding meetings taking place with the local police. As a result, they do not attend. This means that leaders and managers do not know about concerns in the local area that may pose a risk to the child.

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

The manager has taken effective action to address the shortfalls from the previous inadequate inspection. The manager expressed that he had reflected and understood the concerns identified by Ofsted. External professional and family feedback is positive. External consultations have not raised any concerns.

Management oversight is lacking to ensure that important documents are in the child's records. The child's file was missing key documents, such as updated education assessments. Daily record sheets are completed. However, recording of information requires improvement to ensure that information is helpful and accessible to the child. This is a repeat of a recommendation from the previous inspection.

Insufficient staffing levels have raised concerns among the staff team. Staff can work a total of 24 hours on shift without a break or a shift partner to share the

workload. Staff reported fatigue because of the long shifts. Staff have raised their concerns with their manager about the long shift pattern.

The staff rota does not reflect a balance of female and male staff. The evening and night shifts are covered by male staff. The child's social worker said that the child has difficulties building relationships with men and would benefit from a balance of male and female staff on duty, particularly during the evenings and nighttime. In addition, the staff rota does not include the hours or details of the manager and when he is working in the home.

A female member of staff was moved to another home for several weeks after being introduced to the child as a key worker. Consequently, staff changes compromise the overall quality and continuity of care provided to the child.

Since the last inspection, the provider has invested in training. However, not all staff have completed the training. In addition, staff would benefit from attachment and trauma training to increase their knowledge of attachment theory. This would help staff to better understand the child and their needs. Staff would also benefit from online safety training to ensure effective monitoring of electronic devices.

The external monitoring provided by the independent person requires improvement. The views of professionals and the child are not routinely captured to ensure a balanced view of the home. A requirement is made to address this matter.

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 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; 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 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; and that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))	30 November 2022

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 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; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) In particular, ensure that sufficient staff are employed to meet the needs of the children and include a gender balance of staff on duty.	30 November 2022
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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 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)(d)) This particularly relates to local authority safeguarding meetings and ensuring that leaders and managers liaise with the police.	30 November 2022
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising and non-judgemental way that distinguishes between fact and opinion. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This is a repeated recommendation from a previous inspection. (‘Guide to the Children’s Home Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should seek to establish a diverse staff team with a range of interests, skills and experiences. They should lead staff to share those interests, skills and experiences with children to enrich the children’s lives. This includes relevant staff training that meets the needs of the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 52, paragraph 10.6)
- The registered person should ensure that children’s homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the child. This includes helping children to keep their bedrooms tidy. In addition, ensure that children have a suitable garden area to relax and enjoy. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire
FY5 3LJ

Responsible individual: Mandy Teale

Registered manager: Luke Halstead

Inspector

Kamal Bhamra, Social Care Inspector

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