

2557064

Registered provider: A-Triangle Care Limited

Assurance 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 with Ofsted in April 2022.

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 23 August 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

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

Inspectors have 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 did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

There are two children living at the home. Since the previous inspection, one child has moved in. The move was well planned, and the child has settled well into the home.

The home is suitable for the children's needs. However, parts of the home environment require redecoration and cleaning. The children do not have access to a suitable outdoor environment. Staff use the garden area to smoke and leave cigarette ends on the ground. Staff do not adhere to the company policy around smoking, and nor do they promote positive health and well-being role models for the children.

The staff know the children well, and children say that they feel listened to and respected. Children spend time out of the home with friends and family. Staff manage this appropriately to ensure that children are safe.

Both children attend school and are making good progress. The manager advocates for children when areas of concern arise. This supports children to remain in their education settings.

The children have care plans. However, the language used in some plans is not helpful to the children. Furthermore, the manager does not challenge placing local authorities in a timely manner to ensure that children have relevant and updated documents. This means that staff do not always have access to plans that provide sufficient, up-to-date information.

The safety of children

Staff understand risks and vulnerabilities for the children and know how to respond to these. Children say that they feel safe. The manager communicates information to external professionals in a timely way and develops plans that identify risks for children.

There has been a reduction in incidents of children going missing from home since the previous inspection. When children have been missing from home, staff respond quickly and appropriately. However, children are not offered return-home interviews with an independent person following these incidents. This is a missed opportunity to understand why children go missing from care.

The manager does not ensure that the people employed to complete home or garden maintenance are suitably vetted. This places children at potential risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

A permanent and suitably experienced registered manager manages the home. The manager speaks warmly about the children and wants the best for them. The manager and staff understand children's needs well. However, staff have not completed training in relation to the specific needs of one child. This means that staff do not have relevant knowledge or skills to support the child.

Staff have received training in recording and reporting. However, children's records are not accurate, and managers have not reviewed these regularly.

There is a stable and committed staff team. Staff feel supported by the manager. Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of the children, and the team is balanced in terms of gender. Staff receive regular supervision and attend team meetings that allow for reflective discussions about children and their needs.

The manager makes use of internal and external monitoring systems to improve practice in the home. However, the independent visitor does not routinely seek feedback from children or key stakeholders to allow for a robust and evaluative overview of the home.

The 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
23/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
16/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; 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 understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; 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; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;	11 April 2023

provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; 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)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home is in good decorative order, that areas that need painting are done so in a timely manner, that walls are cleaned and that the garden is cleaned from all cigarette ends. Staff should utilise designated smoking areas and not smoke on the premises, as per company policy.	
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; 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; (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(f)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that training specific to children's needs is completed by staff.	25 April 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only—	11 April 2023

employ an individual to work at the children's home; or

if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

The requirements are that—

the individual is of integrity and good character;

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.

For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—

the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or

a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.

The relevant date is—

in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or

in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.

The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—

does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. The registered person may permit an individual to start work at the home despite the fact that the requirement in paragraph (3)(d) has not been met if— the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about each of the matters in Schedule 2 in respect of the individual, but the enquiries in relation to any of the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete; full and satisfactory information in respect of the individual has been obtained in relation to the matters in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 2; the registered person considers that the circumstances are exceptional; and the registered person ensures that the individual is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties, pending receipt of any outstanding information on the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2, which is then considered satisfactory by the registered person. The registered person must take reasonable steps to ensure that any individual who is working at the home and who does not fall within paragraph (2)(a) and (b) is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b)(7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(8)) In particular, the registered person must ensure any person working in or around the home or garden has the relevant checks and supervision, this includes gardeners and maintenance workers.	
14.—(1) The care planning standard is that children— (a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and (b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	25 April 2023

(a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; (b) that arrangements are in place to— (i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and (iii) 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; (c) that each child's relevant plans are followed; (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)) In particular the registered person must ensure that local authority care plans are received for children living in the home.	
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; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's records are accurate, reflect their current needs and are reviewed and signed. The registered person must ensure that information is recorded in a way that is helpful to children.	25 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they are aware of the responsibility of the local authority to provide children with an opportunity to have an independent return-home interview after returning from being missing from care. The responsible person should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person they appoint seeks feedback from children, staff and external professionals and evaluates this

to allow for an impartial judgement of the quality of the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.8)

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

Inspectors

Jenni Gadsby, Social Care Inspector
Judith Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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