

2562678

Registered provider: Flourish Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider owns and manages this home. It provides care for up to four children with social and/or emotional difficulties.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 15 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children do not benefit from a stable staff team. This means that children do not receive consistent and predictable care. Staff turnover within the home hinders opportunities for children to develop trusting relationships with staff. This impedes children's understanding of reliable and healthy relationships. Children say that they see the difference in the care provided by different staff.

Children do not have personalised care plans. Significant information about children's diagnosis and needs is omitted. Staff do not have specific training to meet children's needs. There are limited opportunities to ensure that children's day-to-day needs are met.

The leadership team does not ensure that the conditions of the home remain at a good standard. Repairs in children's bedrooms and improvement of general décor are not completed promptly. This does not give a homely feel for children and does not provide a nurturing and comfortable environment.

The children's guide does not accurately reflect the home environment. Photos used to represent the home give a false view of the home. This means that children who may move in to the home do not have a true representation of the environment to prepare for their move.

Children are supported to attend education. When children have a reduced timetable, staff make efforts to provide education and learning opportunities at home. Staff help children to understand the importance of education and show an interest in their achievements. This helps children to value education and increases opportunities in future life choices.

Children spend time with family and relatives. Staff support practical arrangements to ensure that children benefit from maintaining existing relationships with important people in their lives. This promotes children's identity and increases the likelihood of meaningful relationships between children and their families in the future.

Children enjoy a range of activities and experiences that give them opportunities to learn as well as enjoy their childhood. Children say that they like the range of activities and look forward to them.

Children are not supported to understand diverse cultures and prosocial behaviours. Concerns around racially motivated behaviour from children towards staff are unaddressed. This means that children are vulnerable to being marginalised in society because of their views and at increased risk of radicalisation.

Children who move onto their new home are supported in a planned and sensitive way. This improves the likelihood for success in children settling at their next home, and minimises the trauma that can be associated with a significant move.

Children have recently been appointed an advocate. This gives the children the opportunity to speak to an independent person about their wishes and feelings. The advocate can help to raise any issues and influence decisions on behalf of children. Children will see that their opinions are valued and their rights upheld.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Children are not protected from known risks. Children's risks assessments are not accurate or individualised. Plans are not updated when incidents occur and do not detail children's vulnerabilities. Children are categorised as having the same risks as one another despite them having very different needs. This means that children's plans do not identify ways to help children to stay safe or reduce risks.

Children who go missing from home do not benefit from well-coordinated responses to ensure their safe return. Children's plans do not contain up-to-date information about risks and vulnerabilities. Staff are unclear of actions to take when children go missing from home. This has resulted in incorrect procedures being followed by staff, leaving the children at increased risk of harm and exploitation.

Physical holds are not used in accordance with the legislative framework. On one occasion, an inappropriate and unsafe hold was used on a child. Staff are not trained to deliver such holds. Not all physical holds that take place are recorded as such. This means that debriefs do not always happen, which limits opportunities for staff to learn and prevent future incidents. Children are not given the opportunity to understand the incident or share their views.

Fire safety procedures are not followed. Children are placed at risk of harm due to inappropriate locks on fire exit doors. Children would not be able to independently leave the home through one of the identified fire exits if a fire occurred. The leadership team did not identify this as a concern or consult with the fire safety service.

Potential risks within the home are not always mitigated. Children had access to personal items that belong to staff, such as vapes stored in the staff office. Staff have failed to be vigilant to prevent risks to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home does not have a registered manager. The most-recent manager left with immediate effect and the newly appointed manager does not know the children. Children have expressed their sadness at staff leaving with little or no notice. This means that children are not provided with stable relationships to help them to recover from their own trauma.

Leaders and managers do not have effective systems in place to monitor the quality of care that children receive. The standard of record-keeping in the home is poor. The significant failings and breaches of regulations identified are underpinned by the serious lack of management oversight, analysis and review.

A high turnover of staff has resulted in a team of inexperienced staff. The staff are not able to deliver high-quality care that protects children from harm because they do not have the experience or knowledge to do so. The staff are at a further disadvantage as children's plans are not up to date or accurate. The leadership team does not recognise poor practice of staff and, therefore, practice remains unsafe and unaddressed.

The manager and leadership team have failed to share accurate safeguarding information with professionals. This includes failing to report significant incidents to Ofsted. This has prevented independent external scrutiny and oversight of the actions to take in response to incidents.

The training matrix is ambiguous. It is unclear what training staff have received. The poor oversight of staff training has resulted in occasions where there is no staff member with a first-aid qualification on shift. Children's physical safety and welfare are compromised as a result.

The responsible individual has failed to provide adequate oversight of the home, despite concerns about the previous manager. The responsible individual did not identify that a physical hold was inappropriate. When shortfalls in staff performance have been identified, the responsible individual has not intervened sufficiently. This means that poor practice has continued and the quality of care that children receive is compromised.

The responsible individual has failed to implement actions from a provider-led enquiry. This means that the responsible individual has failed to address concerns and raise standards for the benefit of children.

The leadership and management team has failed to ensure that the statement of purpose contains accurate information. It is presented in a format that is difficult for others to read.

The independent visitor has been ineffective in identifying and raising shortfalls within the home. Poor practice has continued as a result.

The deficits identified during this inspection were brought to the attention of the responsible individual and placing local authority. The responsible individual acknowledges that changes are necessary and welcomes the support of the placing local authority. However, because of the multiple failures identified during this inspection, Ofsted has issued a notice to restrict children moving in to the home. Ofsted has also issued three compliance notices under regulations 12, 13 and 20.

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 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))	16 April 2023
*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.	16 April 2023

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; 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)(h))	
*Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child). Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b) (2))	16 April 2023
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used, or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;	31 May 2023

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))	
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; and that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))	31 May 2023
The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first-aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (1) (2)(a))	31 May 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.	31 May 2023

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(xii)(b))	
A responsible individual must— satisfy the requirements in paragraph (5)(a) to (c); and have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(a)(b))	31 May 2023
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. (Regulation 5 (a))	31 May 2023
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;	31 May 2023

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))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	16 April 2023
When the independent person is carrying out a 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. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI;	31 May 2023

upon request, the local authority for the area in which the home is located; the placing authorities of children; the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager; and the responsible individual (if one is nominated). (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	31 May 2023
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— provide adequate means of escape from the home in the event of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(b))	31 May 2023

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely. In particular, the registered person should consider the purpose and necessity of any locks used in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.9)
- The registered provider should that the children's guide helps children to understand: what the day-to-day routines of the home are ('what happens in the home'), and the care they can expect to receive while living there. In particular, photos used to show areas of the home should be a true representation of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)

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: 2562678

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Flourish Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Flourish Children's Services Limited, 96 Blacker Road, Birkby, Huddersfield HD1 5HN

Responsible individual: Faryal Mohammed

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Cat Clasper, Social Care Inspector

Debra Boldy, Social Care Inspector

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