

2567272

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately run. It is registered to care for up to three children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

A new manager in post who is yet to apply to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 10 January 2022

This monitoring visit

Ofsted completed a monitoring visit on 10 January 2022. The purpose of the visit was to monitor the actions taken by the provider to meet the steps in three compliance notices, issued under section 22A of the Care Standards Act 2000. These were served under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, regulation 13, the leadership and management standard and regulation 35, behaviour management policies and records.

The notices were served after an interim inspection that took place on 24 November 2021. A notice to restrict accommodation of any further children was also served, following the case review on 25 November 2021.

Two children remain living in the home. There have been no further admissions and the provider is complying with the restriction of accommodation notice.

Children's risk assessments are now reviewed more frequently and are stored in a central location for the staff to access. However, plans remain variable in quality and some provide poor guidance for the staff to follow to reduce risks to children, for example if they go missing from the home. Furthermore, changes in the level of risks and management strategies are not updated in response to children's experiences, to ensure that the staff understand and can respond effectively to changes to children's emotional well-being.

Risk management plans do not have clear guidance about what the staff should do if a child returns under the influence of alcohol or substances, or how to help children to keep themselves safe. Information is not recorded consistently across children's plans to support informed practice by the staff.

Children's care plans have been reviewed but continue to lack relevant details, including children's feedback, to guide staff practice. Careful planning and reminders are important for a child due to her specific needs, but this is still not recorded in her plan. As a result, an incident occurred because she became frustrated due to the staff not having clear arrangements in place about a planned activity. More positively, one child is now beginning to engage with a member of staff to consider plans for her future, after an extended period when she was not engaging with the staff in the home.

The previous manager has stepped down and an interim manager is overseeing the home. A new manager and deputy are due to commence in post on completion of safer recruitment checks. There has been further turnover in the staff team. The provider asserts that the current staff will be the stable team moving forward, so that children receive more consistent care.

It is unclear from the records whether members of the new staff team have undertaken all mandatory training. The interim manager could not confirm that a new member of staff has completed an induction because the induction record has been mislaid. Staff do not yet demonstrate clear understanding of children's needs or how to respond to them.

There is a new audit tool in place to provide the manager with improved oversight of children's progress and practice in the home. However, this is not yet used effectively to plan and record whether actions are completed to improve practice and children's experiences of living in the home.

Supervision of the staff is still not taking place in accordance with the provider's policy to provide effective oversight of practice in the home.

The interim manager has, until very recently, worked shifts in the home to cover shortfalls due to difficulties in recruiting new staff and sickness. This affects his ability to fulfil the functions of the management role.

Although some external agencies are informed of serious safeguarding concerns, a notification was not sent to Ofsted about an incident. This means the regulator does not understand what actions are taken to ensure that a child is kept safe.

Physical intervention has been used on one occasion since the interim inspection. The recording of the use of restraint is now clearer and the staff are debriefed about the measure. However, the record does not demonstrate whether the child has been

given the opportunity to speak about the measure used or has declined to do so. There is no management oversight of the record to evaluate whether the measure was appropriate or effective.

A case review was held on 11 January 2022. The decision was made that the provider has failed to meet the steps of the compliance notices. New compliance notices have been served under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, regulation 13, the leadership and management standard, and regulation 35, behaviour management policies and records. This is to ensure improved rigour in safeguarding practice, the management of the home and behaviour management, so that children are kept safe and to meet children's needs more effectively.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/11/2021	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
09/06/2021	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, 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— 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	13 February 2022

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, the registered person should ensure that members of the staff team understand the model of care set out in the home's statement of purpose, and that they have a clear understanding of processes and recording systems for how they support children's outcomes. Robust monitoring and review systems should be used to identify and improve practice to support children's progress that includes children's views. Children should receive consistent care from a stable, skilled staff team.	
* 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. 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))	13 February 2022

Specifically, individual risk assessments should be bespoke to each child's needs and risks. Plans should demonstrate how the staff help children become safer. They should be accessible to guide practice in the home. Staff should be skilled in responding to risks to children's safety.	
* 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; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use 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 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)(b)(i)(c)) This particularly refers to records containing accurate information about methods and duration of measures used. Record of debriefs should be completed with the child and records should indicate if the child declines the opportunity to discuss the measure.	13 February 2022

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. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) Specifically, all incidents that present a clear risk to children's safety should be notified promptly.	13 February 2022
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; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)) Specifically, the report should clearly analyse and evaluate the care provided so that the regulator has a clear overview of care provided in the home. Children's bedrooms should be seen as part of the visit. The independent person should recommend actions to improve the quality of care and escalate any concerns where the manager does not respond to recommended actions.	13 February 2022
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.	13 February 2022

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 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)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that monitoring systems are in place and that the quality of care is reviewed and reported upon within timescales. The report should include input from stakeholders.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff receive reflective supervision in line with the provider's policy	13 February 2022

to support their practice. Staff should receive supervision from an individual who has oversight of practice in the home.	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c)) Specifically, records of administration should be clear and follow dispensing advice. Any recording should clearly identify the individual completing the record and the reason for any error.	13 February 2022
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(ix)) In particular, the staff should take appropriate action to support children to engage in education, training or employment to maximise their future opportunities and to help them to overcome barriers to do so.	13 February 2022

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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)) Specifically, children's plans should be kept up to date and reflect how the staff are to support their individual needs effectively.	13 February 2022
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(i)(iii)(iv))	13 February 2022

In particular, that children's views on how the staff can help them should be incorporated into their plans.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that systems are in place so that pre-admission planning fully considers a child's assessed needs and the impact on children already living in the home, prior to offering a placement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff maintain clear, detailed records of work undertaken with children to support their progress. Records should be easily accessible so that children and other stakeholders understand their journey while living in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that maintenance in the home is completed promptly to ensure that the children live in a home that is kept to a high standard of decoration, taking into account their views. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2567272

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: 40-42 Kemble Street, Prescot L34 5SQ

Responsible individual: Alekos Aresti

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Karen Willson, Social Care Inspector

Mark Woodbridge, Social Care Inspector

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