

2567658

Registered provider: Wynford House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company own this home. It is registered to provide care for up to two children aged eight to 18 years with social and/or emotional needs.

There has been no registered manager since 1 June 2021. A new manager is in post but has yet to apply to register.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 19 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 August 2021

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

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

Since the previous inspection, four children moved into the home and three children have left the home. The admission for one child was not well planned and they lived at the home for a short period of time. The manager did not follow their own internal admission procedure. Statutory documentation and background information about the child had not been sought. Staff did not have the training to provide them with skills to meet this child's needs.

Children who live at the home do not receive advocacy support. The children's guide does not contain information about advocacy support agencies that are available to them, including the Children's Commissioner for England and Ofsted. As a result, children do not receive this information prior to moving to the home.

Records relating to the care provided to children, and staff's recruitment files are not readily available. The managers shared that this is because the records are stored electronically, and the internet access is intermittent in certain areas of the home. This has a negative impact on the management oversight of records. Because of this, the manager is unable to take immediate action as part of his quality assurance of records.

Children's care plans do not accurately reflect children's needs and their progress. This disorganised approach to care planning undermines the progress that children have made. The manager took swift action to address this shortfall during the inspection.

Partnership working with external agencies is not effective. The manager does not always notify the local authority of where the home is located when children move to the home. For example, external agencies were unaware of a child living at the home who required specialist support for her mental health.

Staff have meaningful conversations with children which impact positively on children's experiences. For example, staff support children with any anxieties about children's education. This positive approach has improved one child's engagement with education. A tutor shared that staff have been supportive with their role to ensure that the best outcome is achieved for the child.

Children enjoy a range of activities with staff. This helps children to build trust and to develop positive relationships with staff. For example, children have enjoyed go-karting and visits to theme parks.

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

Managers and staff take effective action when incidents occur to keep the children safe. They understand potential risks to children and use their professional judgement appropriately to respond to incidents when children go missing, self-harm or use illegal substances. However, learning from these incidents is not always captured in records. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that staff provide children with a consistent approach to risk management.

The inspector identified that some fire doors were damaged and do not have the required self-closing function. Managers took immediate action during the inspection to ensure that there was a plan to get these replaced in a timely manner.

Staff do not clearly record the details of restraint. It is unclear what action was taken by staff and how the child was supported during the restraint. Debriefs with children and staff following the restraint is not clearly recorded. Therefore, managers are unable to adequately review these incidents to ensure that the use of the physical restraint is proportionate and necessary. This means opportunities to fully consider learning from these incidents have been missed.

The manager ensures that all staff are subject to a comprehensive recruitment procedure to ensure that they are suitable people to be working in the home. As a result, children are being cared for by staff who are safe.

The responsible individual takes immediate action following allegations shared by a child. The responsible individual has been effective in following the safeguarding procedure, when he has consulted with the designated officer, completes an internal investigation and shares his findings with all professionals. As a result, poor practice is challenged, and children know that their concerns are being listened to.

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

There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection. During the COVID-19 restrictions, the provider closed the home for a short period of time. Since reopening in April 2021, a new interim manager has been appointed and a new staff team has been established. The requirements from the previous inspection have not been addressed and are restated.

None of the staff team have received training in child criminal exploitation, self-harm, adverse childhood experiences and mental health. This means staff do not have the required skills to recognise the early signs of risk posed to children.

Staff receive effective support through supervisions. The manager uses these forums to test staff's understanding of safeguarding procedures. One staff member said she feels well supported. Staff also have an external confidential support network

available to them. This helps to strengthen staff's resilience in providing care to children.

The manager has not considered all known local information when considering the location of the home. For example, potential risks associated with other local provisions for other children nearby are not fully considered. This has a potential to impact on children's welfare and safety.

The manager does not consult with children, parents or external professionals to inform his six-monthly quality-of-care report. Nor has the manager considered an evaluation of progress made by children. The responsible individual has plans to improve this, but these are not yet implemented.

The responsible individual has an understanding of the shortfalls relating to the care planning for children, staff development and management oversight. Managers have implemented an improvement plan, and some work has commenced to improve the quality of care provided to children and staff development. The improvement plan is in progress and the impact this has made is not known.

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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that children's documents contain accurate information relating to children's risks and give guidance to staff on how to respond to these risks.	31 October 2021
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; and ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(e)) This specifically relates to ensuring that staff receive training to meet the needs of children.	31 October 2021

This requirement was raised at the previous inspection and is restated.	
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 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children are admitted with accordance to the internal admission policy.	31 October 2021
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that all fire door is fire safety compliant.	31 October 2021
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— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; and the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and 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")—	31 October 2021

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)(v)(vii) (b)(i)(ii) (c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that restraint records provide a clear description of the action taken by staff and include staff and child debriefs.	
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)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the provider receives all statutory documentation for a child prior to admission.	31 October 2021
The registered person must notify, without delay, the local authority for the area in which the children's home is located of every admission of a child into the home and every discharge of a child from the home. (Regulation 41 (1)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the provider informs the local authority of children who are placed in their care.	31 October 2021
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;	31 October 2021

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. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))

This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that he uses the six-monthly monitoring report to improve the quality of care provided to children.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide states the contact details of all local and national advocacy support agencies available to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person should ensure that all information kept electronically can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the recording relating to the care of children is clear and must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's location risk assessment considers the impact of local geographical risk to the home and areas which children access. This specifically relates to details of children's homes and semi-independence homes which is known by children and staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: 2567658

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wynford House Limited

Responsible individual: Christopher Gowlett

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sam Dulay-Kainth, Social Care Inspector

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