

2577036

Sozo Care Homes Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home's statement of purpose states that it provides care and accommodation to up to three children who may be experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties.

This privately owned home registered with Ofsted on 8 April 2020. The registered manager left on 21 November 2020. The contract between the provider and the registered individual was terminated on 26 January 2021. The provider has informed Ofsted that a new manager and a new responsible individual are in post.

Two children currently live at this home.

Inspection date: 10 February 2021

This monitoring visit

The main reason for the visit was to check the impact of the recent changes in leadership and management on children's safety, experiences and progress.

In December 2020, Ofsted was notified of serious concerns regarding the practice of the previous responsible individual. The concerns were in relation to the running of the home in the absence of a registered manager, the recruitment of staff and a failure to follow safer recruitment guidelines. These concerns were subsequently shared with the provider who conducted an internal investigation. This resulted in the contract between the provider and the registered individual being terminated.

The more specific concerns related to children running away from the home, availability of food, quality of the physical environment and how staff are recruited. A concern about the staffing levels that came to light during the visit was also considered.

The staff team's inability to engage children is the main concern identified at the visit. The changes in the staff team lead to disruption in relationships. This has increased the instability in children's lives.

The staffing levels are maintained at an appropriate level. However, the staff duty roster does not always promote continuity of care. For example, on one day, both staff members on duty were new to working at this home, and the manager was not present. The staff did not work together effectively to meet children's needs.

Children spend significant time away from the home during the day and often return home long after their curfew. Not knowing where children are, who they are with and what they are doing is highly concerning for the professionals and families.

Staff always carefully follow any risk management plans and the multi-agency procedures on safeguarding when children are missing from the home. Staff share important information with other professionals and children's families in a timely manner. Staff attend and contribute to important meetings about children living at the home.

No serious incidents have occurred in the home in the last six months. As far as it is known, children have not engaged in any serious incidents or criminal activities outside the home. Children regularly attend their appointments with the youth offending services.

There are some signs of children beginning to build closer relationships with some staff members in the last few weeks. Children are talking more with staff and key-working sessions are becoming more frequent. The residents' meetings and movie nights have been re-established recently.

Children's engagement in their online tuition is varied. One child engages well with all the lessons. The other child started engaging in lessons only recently and sporadically. However, after a two-year gap, this is a small but significant step forward.

The physical environment is of a good quality. The house is maintained well and children are comfortable.

There is plenty of food in the home. This includes fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as unperishable items, such as pasta, rice and beans. The variety of food on offer is good. For example, staff bought seven different types of breakfast cereal, as children told them that they like eating cereal. Staff encourage children to eat well and involve them in the planning of weekly menus.

One child reported that he likes the home and feels safe. The child's parent said that she was not satisfied with the quality of the care in the home. However, another child's parent said that she was happy with the care and support that her son receives.

The provider's own audit has shown that some required information is not present on some staff files. The previous responsible individual did not follow safer

recruitment procedures. The provider is seeking to obtain the missing information and has taken appropriate steps to secure a more robust procedure for recruiting staff in the future.

A new leadership and management team is implementing an improvement plan. There are some small signs of progress being made. Three requirements are included in this report to support the home's compliance with regulations and better outcomes for children.

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

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 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff on duty are able to engage children and meet their needs.	1 May 2021
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission. Before implementing, or making an amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to, the missing	1 May 2021

child policy, the registered person must— consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person; and have regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. (Regulation 34 (4)(a) (5)(a)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must review and make staff's practices relating to engaging children more effective, so that they result in children not going missing from home, or at least in the significant reduction of their absence from the home.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— 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— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))	1 May 2021

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the children's home's compliance with regulations and children's experiences and progress. The methodology included on-site and off-site activities. One inspector visited the home and the other inspector had telephone conversations with the children's social workers and parents.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2577036

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sozo Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 34 Swansea Court, London E16 2RT

Responsible individual: Oyinlola Ogundele

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Seka Graovac, Social Care Inspector

Brenda McLaughlin, Her Majesty's Social Care Inspector

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