

2580890

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by private provider who operates other homes in the South West and nationally. The home can provide care for two children, but at the time of this inspection only one child was living here.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020

Visit dates: 15 to 16 October 2020

Previous inspection date: Not previously inspected

Previous inspection judgement: Not previously inspected

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

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

The care of children

The child living at this home is cared for well. Since the child moved in, the manager and staff team have developed an improved understanding of his diverse and complex needs. Interactions between the staff and child were observed to be nurturing and relaxed.

The child's cultural needs are being supported appropriately. The child's parent confirmed that he is happy that staff consult with him and seek advice and guidance about how to meet his son's cultural needs.

The child is supported to maintain his relationships with family members. The manager ensures parents and social workers are regularly informed about the child's engagement and his progress. A parent confirmed that the weekly reports sent by the staff are very detailed and provide him with a good overview of his son's week.

Staff recognise the importance of education; they travel long distances to support the child to attend his school. A headteacher who contributed to this assurance visit said, 'The team go above and beyond to support the child to attend school, communication is good and effective behaviour management approaches are shared.'

The child's health needs are considered and met. The manager and team work closely with a wide range of healthcare professionals. Feedback received from healthcare professionals has been, without exception, positive.

The manager and team have reviewed the child's bedtime routine. The changes implemented to date have been effective. New routines and strategies have been introduced. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in incidents occurring at bedtime. The child now benefits from having a restful night's sleep.

The home environment is safe and functional to meet the child's needs. However, most of the environment is sparse and does not present as homely. Opportunities to personalise the environment have been missed.

The safety of children

The management of safeguarding concerns is effective. Safeguarding concerns are dealt with appropriately and when poor practice is identified, the registered manager takes effective action and works closely with safeguarding agencies. Lessons learned from investigations are implemented into practice.

The manager has used referral information provided by the local authority and from the child's family to complete person-centred plans and risk assessments. These documents are regularly reviewed and provide staff with clear and concise information about how to meet the child's needs. To date, the manager has not been successful in obtaining the placing authority's care plan. The manager has

taken appropriate action; she has formally escalated her concerns with the child's placing authority.

Behavioural incidents take place regularly and often result in the child being held or guided. However, staff manage incidents well. They ensure holds are only used to safeguard the child and are for the minimum amount of time. Despite this good work, behavioural records completed by staff lack critical information. They do not always detail the antecedence, location or duration of the intervention. The manager's monitoring of these records is not effective. In addition, opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and explore alternative strategies following incidents are not detailed in post-incident discussions.

Staff are confident at raising any concerns they have with leaders and managers. Leaders and managers ensure all complaints are acknowledged and responded to. Records indicate that the home's policies and procedures are followed effectively. Actions taken, and outcomes, are clearly identified.

The manager ensures that those adults looking after the child are safe to do so. Safer recruitment checks are completed. The manager has verified the suitability and safety of agency staff who have worked at the home.

Leaders and managers

The home is managed by a new registered manager who holds a relevant qualification. She has the experience to undertake her role. The registered manager's child-centred approach is shared by her care team, who together have established a meaningful and respectful relationship with the child.

The manager ensures that all care staff have completed basic mandatory and specialist training. These training opportunities provide staff with information they need to understand the child's experiences and to meet his current needs. For example, staff have completed training in using alternative communication. Staff said, 'It is early days, but by using signs and symbols we now have a better understanding of how the child is feeling. He is now exercising choice and sharing his views and feelings.'

Monitoring of the home takes place routinely and external audits are of a good quality. The manager uses the information and recommendations made by the independent visitor to improve the quality of care and services. The manager's internal monitoring requires improvement. Records relating to behavioural incidents lack management scrutiny and evaluation. The manager has not identified or rectified omissions in records completed by staff.

The quality and content of the registered manager's supervision are good. The supervisor has enquired about the manager's welfare and well-being. Matters relating to the child and joint agency working are discussed. However, the registered manager has not used formal supervisions with the team to reflect on behavioural patterns and trends or discuss monitoring findings.

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
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(h))	01/13/2020

Recommendations

- To be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, children's homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9).
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4).
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and

experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2). In particular, ensure that staff have an opportunity to reflect on behavioural patterns and trends and discuss monitoring findings within formal supervisions.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2580890

Registered provider: Idem Living Ltd

Registered provider address: 6 Stable Court, Business Centre Water Lane
Tarbock Green, Prescott, L35 1RD

Responsible individual: Andrew Palmer

Registered manager: Jessica Shelton-Smith

Inspector

Sharron Escott, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020