

# 2590934

Registered provider: Zone Central Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in June 2020 and is privately operated. It provides care for up to three children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2023.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

### Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 12 October 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 12/10/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 05/07/2022      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 08/06/2021      | Full            | Good                            |

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children settle well into the home and make good progress from their individual starting points. They build meaningful relationships with a consistent team of staff who are warm and nurturing. As a result, children feel safe and well cared for. Warm interactions between children and staff were observed during this inspection.

The staff team helps children to express their views. Staff hold key-work sessions and house meetings. Key-work sessions are responsive to the emerging needs of each child. The sessions enable children to reflect and think of alternative ways of managing difficult emotions. As a result, one child has made significant progress and no longer requires their liberty to be restricted as the risk of harm has reduced.

Children's health needs are met well. Staff encourage and support children to attend their routine health appointments. Specialist help is sought when necessary, including support from an in-house qualified psychiatrist who provides guidance to the staff. Feedback from health services is very positive about the work staff carry out to ensure that children receive the appropriate support to meet their needs.

Staff understand the importance of education. They support children to attend school and work closely with teachers to provide additional support when needed. In the absence of formal education, children are offered a range of meaningful activities at home, including home tuition. One child, who had not been in education before moving into the home, is now attending college and is enjoying learning.

Children are supported to maintain positive relationships with the people who are important to them. Staff work closely with children and their families to improve the quality of the time they spend together. As a result, family relationships are strengthened. Parents are very positive about the care provided to their children.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children are safeguarded and say that they feel safe in their home. They receive good-quality care, protection and support from a caring and committed staff team. The trusting relationships that children develop with staff enhance their safety because children can talk to staff about things that worry them.

Children's known and potential risks are well understood by staff. Staff are proactive and curious about children's changing behaviours. Room searches are conducted sensitively when there is cause for concern. There is well-coordinated communication with other agencies when concerns are raised about children's welfare. Safeguarding practice could be further strengthened by ensuring that all risk assessments for children show clear evaluation of the risks and important information that staff need to know.

Children's individual positive behaviour support plans are effective. Staff set consistent boundaries and routines for children. There is a clear reward system that promotes and encourages positive behaviour. Incidents in the home are managed well, and staff use a range of techniques to help de-escalate difficult situations. As a result, no children have been restrained since February 2023.

The admissions process for new children appropriately considers their needs and risks and the impact on children already living in the home. Managers work with placing authorities and families to understand children's needs. However, managers do not always consider staff's skills or training required to meet the identified needs of children. This limits staff's capacity to implement effective risk-reduction strategies.

The home's physical environment is clean and safe for children. However, leaders and managers have not promptly removed old furniture and rubbish left at the back of the garden shed.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Leaders and managers have worked hard to address the concerns identified at the last full inspection. They have taken effective action to ensure that the requirements raised at the previous inspection are met.

Leaders and managers know the home's strengths and areas for development. There are effective reviewing systems in place to ensure that leaders and managers constantly review the quality of care provided to children.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision which focuses on children's needs, experiences and plans. Safeguarding issues and staff development needs are discussed. This demonstrates effective management oversight of staff practice and development, and the progress children are making.

Leaders and managers work well with children's professional networks. Feedback from professionals is positive regarding the quality of care provided and communication from staff. However, leaders, managers and staff do not consistently challenge placing authorities when they do not fulfil their statutory obligations, such as promptly arranging an initial placement review for a new child and updating their care plans.

Staff access training in core areas, such as safeguarding, medication, and health and safety. They receive more targeted training in subjects such as child exploitation, autism spectrum disorder awareness and self-harm. However, not all unqualified staff are enrolled on the required residential childcare course in a timely way. This causes delay in staff attaining the qualification that they need to work in the home.

## 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                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that they consider if the staff team has the knowledge, skills and experience to meet children's needs at the point of referral. Additionally, leaders and managers must ensure that children's risk assessments are clear for staff.</p> | <p>27 November 2023</p> |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children's needs. This specifically relates to ensuring that the back garden area is maintained appropriately so that it is a more user-friendly space. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that they maintain effective communication with placing authorities, including challenging inadequate practice. This specifically relates to managers chasing and challenging placing authorities when they do not promptly arrange initial placement reviews for new children and when they do not update and provide children's documents as required. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are enrolled on the relevant children's residential care qualification and undertake all essential training in a timely way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.12)

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspector has 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:** 2590934

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Zone Central Limited

**Registered provider address:** Zone Central Limited, 4 Cedar Park, Cobham Road, Ferndown Industrial Estate, Wimborne BH21 7SF

**Responsible individual:** Dawn Quye-Joyce

**Registered manager:** Sarah Bonner

## Inspector

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector

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