

2590934

Registered provider: Zone Central Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children who have learning disabilities within the autism spectrum. The manager was registered by Ofsted in June 2020 and is currently undertaking the required level 5 qualification.

There were three children accessing the home on a short-breaks basis at the time of this inspection.

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.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

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: good

Children are supported by caring and patient staff who continually put the progress of children at the heart of their work. For example, the staff have supported one child to begin to use single words to express his needs, where previously the child was non-verbal.

Staff build strong positive relationships with children and understand their needs very well. Staff make sure that children receive personalised care that meets their needs. Children staying in the home are well supported to settle in quickly. The staff are increasingly becoming more skilled in alternative methods of communication to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the wishes and feelings of non-verbal children.

Parents reported that their children receive good care and always seem happy at this home. Professionals are equally positive about the care children receive and the progress that they are making.

Children make good progress over the course of their stay in the home. Staff communicate well with children's teachers and help to provide good routines to support children's learning. All children have part-time education programmes to meet their individual needs.

Children's interests and social activities are supported well. The staff take every opportunity to provide engaging and interesting activities in and outside the home, for example, cooking with them, visiting local parks and playing in the well-equipped garden.

Leaders recognise that the home needs refurbishment. They have clear development plans to commission work for it to become a more welcoming and friendly environment in order to enhance opportunities for children and promote their personal development. The home is maintained to a good standard and is kept clean and tidy.

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

Children's safety is promoted well, and risks are minimised effectively. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection reported that they are very satisfied that children are kept safe in the home.

The staff talked confidently and knowledgeably about the safeguarding risks for children and they respond to safeguarding concerns appropriately. They always ensure that they effectively monitor and supervise the children to keep them safe.

Staff are diligent in identifying risks and making appropriate changes to the living environment to minimise these. They effectively incorporate strategies to keep children safe thorough behaviour support plans.

The staff skilfully understand and support children to find ways to address difficult behaviours. Care plans and risk assessments appropriately identify how children should be managed. The guidance available for staff promotes consistent and positive care for children. The staff give children clear messages to reinforce what behaviour they expect from children, using visual cues that are appropriate for children's individual needs.

The recruitment of staff is undertaken well. Leaders are suitably robust about safer recruitment to ensure that adults are deemed to be suitable to work with children. They are good systems in place to check ongoing suitability.

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

The registered manager has been absent from the home for some time. However, the responsible individual and a recently appointed interim manager have ensured that children's care continues to be well managed and their needs are met well.

There are significant weaknesses in the oversight of the home's operation. For example, leaders requested a variation from Ofsted to offer a home to three children on a permanent basis. Despite the variation being effective from January 2021, the home has continued to offer a service on a short-breaks basis to children. Consequently, it is operating outside of its statement of purpose.

The independent visitor's reports are not received by Ofsted in a timely manner. Six monthly monitoring reports do not evidence the views of children, parents or stakeholders. The children's guide fails to contain sufficient information for children or their parents on how to make a complaint and the process for this.

The appointment of an interim manager means that staff are now benefiting from regular supervision, which they appreciate and consider helpful. Staff training has mainly relied on online training during the pandemic. Most of the staff are awaiting training in first aid and restraint. Staff, however, gave good information about how they are expected to support children to prevent the use of physical intervention. Leaders have a detailed training matrix in place that outlines how face-to-face training will be re-introduced.

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 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— keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document; ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about— the children's guide; how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with. (Regulation 7 (1) (2)(d)(i)(ii))	31 August 2021
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and	31 August 2021

notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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 must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44(1) (4)(a)(b) (7)(a)) In particular, the independent person's report must be sent to HMCI in a timely manner.	31 August 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; 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.	31 August 2021

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))

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2590934

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Zone Central Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Jommar Handog

Registered manager: Casey Palmer

Inspector

Juanita Mayers, Social Care Inspector

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