

2590934

Registered provider: Zone Central Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three children with learning disabilities.

The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

At the time of this inspection, there were no children living at the home.

Inspection date: 16 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

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

The care of children

Children develop trusted relationships with staff, and with staff's support and encouragement, they make some progress. For example, they improve their social and communication skills and re-engage with their education. Staff celebrate children's achievements with them.

Staff help children take part in their preferred activities, such as going to the gym, walks in the park and trips to the local shops. They are supported to cook and bake cakes, and they enjoy 'smoothie nights' in the home.

Children's wishes and feelings are understood, and they are helped to set their own goals for the month, such as to 'be kind'.

The safety of children

Although no serious or widespread concerns were identified during this inspection, further improvements are required to ensure that children are consistently kept safe.

While staff say that they understand children's risks, vulnerabilities and the strategies to keep them safe, not all staff have signed to acknowledge that they have read children's risk assessments.

At times, staff's lack of supervision of children in the home has undermined children's safety. For example, children managed to obtain scissors from the office. On another occasion, a vulnerable child managed to leave the home without staff's supervision.

Staff's strategies to de-escalate children's challenging behaviours are not always successful. On occasion, staff have been injured, and police intervention has been required. Leaders and managers recognise that this is not good enough and have acted appropriately to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The responsible individual and manager recognise that children and staff have experienced recent challenges in the home. Their requests for greater multi-agency partnership working to address their concerns have not been effective. For example, their requests to placing authorities to fund increased staff supervision levels in the home have not always been agreed. On these occasions, the provider has funded additional staff themselves.

A new manager was appointed in August 2022. She has applied to register with Ofsted and is getting daily support from the responsible individual.

The leaders' and manager's monitoring of the home is mainly effective. They have responded satisfactorily to the majority of the requirements that were set at the last inspection. However, the inspector found one serious incident unreported to Ofsted. Therefore, the requirement in relation to notifying Ofsted of all serious incidents has been repeated.

Leaders and managers are actively recruiting to fill staff vacancies. Recruitment procedures are safe. New staff undertake a comprehensive induction, and staff's mandatory training helps them meet the needs of children as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Enhanced training and refresher courses support staff's further learning and development.

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

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	30 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's 'read and sign' procedure so that they are kept up to date with children's risk assessments. ('Guide to the Children's Home's Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2590934

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Zone Central Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Dawn Quye-Joyce

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Victoria Jones, Social Care Inspector

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