

2591479

Registered provider: Nurture Childcare Services Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states it provides care for children who have experienced emotional/behavioural difficulties and challenging behaviours.

There is currently no manager in post at the home.

Inspection date: 16 March 2022

Date of last inspection: 17 November 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has declined in effectiveness.

The home has been without a registered manager since August 2021. A manager was appointed but left the home in December 2021, and had not registered with Ofsted. As a result, day-to-day oversight of the home is significantly weakened. A deputy, although assuming additional responsibilities, is currently working shifts. The responsible individual provides support to the staff, however, they have been involved in managing incidents that have occurred in the home. A requirement is made in respect of this.

Since the last inspection, one child has left the home in a planned way. The managers recognised that they were unable to keep the child safe due to the frequency and duration of incidents of the child going missing from home. Staff acted appropriately to try and prevent these incidents occurring and in seeking the child's safe return.

One child has recently been admitted to the home. The staff are working with the virtual school and local authority to find a suitable education provision. However, the child's education, health and care plan has not been reviewed for over two years and staff were unaware of this. This hinders an appropriate search and gives staff out of date information on the child's learning needs. A requirement is made in respect of this.

The home is spacious and located in a pleasant area. However, there are maintenance issues inside the home that need addressing. Also, there are hazards outside the home, such as planks of wood, large empty delivery sacks and empty pallets, which need removing. A requirement is made in respect of this.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made regarding assessments of children's risks. This requirement has not been met. Current assessments alongside behaviour support plans are insufficiently detailed to offer staff clear guidance on how they should respond. For example, some risks are identified but do not contain any advice to staff. This requirement is therefore restated.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made regarding managerial oversight of the home. This requirement has not been met. There is no manager in post and there has been a high turnover of staff. Currently, there are insufficient core staff working at the home to meet the high staffing ratios required for the child's care. This has resulted in non-core staff being used. In addition, staff have insufficient capacity to complete records in a timely way. This requirement is therefore restated.

Staff have not received training in areas that would improve their care of the child and ensure his needs are fully met. For example, it is identified by the local authority that the child requires therapeutic care and that the child has additional cognitive needs. Staff are not trained in these areas. A requirement is made in respect of this.

The child has been subject to restraint by staff who are not trained to execute such holds. The responsible individual gave assurances at the time of inspection that all staff caring for the child would receive this training. Also, that staff rotas would be immediately adjusted to ensure all staff working with the child were qualified in executing physical restraint. A requirement is made in respect of this.

When restraint has been used by staff, the child has not been given the opportunity to discuss this with the manager or designated person. In addition, there is no evaluation of incidents that might identify patterns and trends to improve staff responses and prevent reoccurrence.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made with regard to the gender balance of staff working in the home. Although there are plans to address this, those plans are not fully realised. The recommendation is restated.

Staff work hard at providing engaging activities for the child each day. The child's interests are used as a starting point to help them learn while formal education is being arranged. For example, the child's interest in fishing is used effectively. The child enjoys daily fishing trips with staff and he is encouraged to research the types of fish, weigh them and shop for additional fishing kit. Other activities are also offered, such as playing football, and going on walks and trips to a zoo.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) This relates to giving guidance to staff, in risk assessments and behaviour support plans, that is detailed and comprehensive. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	31 May 2022
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	31 May 2022

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)(c)(d)(e)) This relates to ensuring that staff receive training that corresponds to the child's needs. In particular, training in therapeutic care, and cognitive and social delay. Also, to ensuring there are sufficient staff on duty to enable completion of tasks other than direct care offered to children. Also, to ensuring the provider monitors and minimises the turnover of staff at the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(c)) This specifically relates to the child being offered on each occasion opportunity to discuss staff actions with a person not involved in the restraint. Also, that this discussion assists in understanding the child's experience and improving staff responses to prevent reoccurrence.	30 April 2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This relates to securing updated education, health and care plans.	30 April 2022

The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a) (2)(c)(i)) This relates to ensuring all children’s bedrooms are well decorated and furnished. In particular, that curtains are replaced, flaking paintwork is repaired, children have sufficient storage and that bedrooms are not used for general household storage. Also, that damp in the home is addressed and the outside space is kept tidy and free of hazards.	30 April 2022
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children’s home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))	31 May 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure, whenever possible, staff in day-to-day contact with children should include staff from the different gender groups. Where the home’s statement of purpose makes it explicit that the home uses staff of one sex only, clear guidance will need to be in place and followed as to how children are enabled to maintain relationships with people of a different gender. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 54, paragraph 10.22)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 2591479

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Nurture Childcare Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Seighford Hall, Clanford Road, Seighford, Stafford
ST18 9NL

Responsible individual: Natalie Williams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Pauline Yates, Social Care Inspector

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