

2591479

Registered provider: Nurture Childcare Services Ltd

Full 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 provides care for children who have experienced social and emotional difficulties.

There is an interim manager in post.

There has been no registered manager in post since January 2022

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 August 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 21 June 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
21/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/03/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

There is one child living in the home. He is settled and making progress in some areas of his life. Most staff know the child well, and they have built trusted relationships. This helps the child to develop a sense of belonging.

Staff encourage the child to take part in various activities outside of the home. This helps him to develop his self-esteem and social skills. The child shows pride in his abilities and presentation. His achievements are celebrated in the home.

Staff regularly talk to the child about his family, and they support his wishes and feelings about spending time with them.

The child has not attended formal education provision for over a year. The staff team supplements the child's limited online tuition with activities and trips, but this does not fully meet the child's educational needs and has limited their academic progress. Staff have regularly raised this issue with the child's social worker and independent reviewing officer. However, they have not escalated their concerns to more senior managers in the local authority, despite the child continuing to miss full-time education.

The child is in good physical health, and staff support the child in receiving routine, age-appropriate healthcare. However, the child's cognitive abilities remained unassessed for a significant time which delayed other forms of support, such as therapeutic intervention and mental health support. The lack of escalation from leaders and managers in challenging delays in the local authority means the child has not received appropriate specialist support for their emotional and mental well-being.

The child knows how to raise issues, and the staff team listens to and acts on what the child says. The child's wishes and feelings inform their daily care. An independent advocate has recently been identified for the child.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The child feels safe in his home and with the staff.

Some of the physical restrictions in the home, such as the locking of a utility room, have not been reviewed appropriately. This means the child's physical environment has been unnecessarily restricted, which has also limited the child's ability to develop skills in managing aspects of their behaviour.

When the child makes allegations or disclosures, the staff team acts promptly to ensure the child is safe and appropriate agencies are involved. This has included successfully challenging other agencies when their response has not been adequate.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities in the event of any safeguarding issues concerning the child. They understand the potential risks of online activity and what they need to do if a child goes missing from home. The interim manager has made connections to local services, such as the missing-from-home coordinator in the police service, to promote collaborative working.

The use of restraint or restrictive practices by staff is proportionate and necessary. However, it is not always well recorded and in line with regulation. This limits the ability for managers to review the steps taken to avoid physically restraining the child.

The staff team promotes positive behaviour, and the need to restrain the child has been reduced while living in the home. However, direct work with the child is not well planned and is often reactive to incidents. In addition, staff have sometimes blamed the child for behaviour arising from the child's previous experiences. This is not in line with the care identified in the home's statement of purpose and does not help the child to understand and manage their feelings.

Potential staff members are appropriately vetted and checked before commencing work in the home. This ensures that only suitable people work with the child.

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

The home has not had a registered manager since January 2022. A manager was appointed in December 2022, but their application to register has only recently been submitted. Coupled with changes in the position of responsible individual, there has been a lengthy period of instability for staff and the child.

The manager in post has had a positive impact since being appointed. The requirements made at the previous inspection have been met. The manager has improved oversight and scrutiny of the functioning of the home.

Staff receive detailed and child-focused supervision, and the staff team meets regularly to discuss any issues about the child or the home. Staff receive training appropriate to the child's needs and the home's statement of purpose. However, this training is not consistently embedded in staff practice.

Staff are happy working in the home, and the staff team is more stable. The provider does not use any agency staff, using two employed bank staff who are known to the child to cover staff absences.

The manager is aspirational for the child and the home. However, this does not always translate into consistently good practice with the child. For example, direct

work with the child does not always meet their needs and does not fit with the home's ethos.

Leaders and managers understand the plan for the child but have not been effective in challenging the local authority over a lack of progress in meeting the child's needs. In addition, the child's day-to-day care has not been reviewed frequently or robustly enough so leaders and the manager can continue to improve the quality of care provided for the child. For example, staffing levels have not kept pace with the child's changing needs and behaviours, and a room has continued to be unnecessarily locked.

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
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (c)(ii)(iii)(iv)) This specifically relates to not locking rooms in the home unnecessarily or for disproportionate lengths of time.	24 October 2023
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; and if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to effectively challenging the local authority or other agencies and escalating concerns when necessary.	24 October 2023

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; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff— help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 6 (2)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i) (b)(v)) This specifically relates to staff applying the ethos of the home as set out in the home’s statement of purpose when talking with and working with children. It also relates to staff understanding the impact that abuse or neglect may have on children’s behaviour and using this to inform their work with children.	24 October 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(viii)) This specifically relates to ensuring children receive appropriate educational provision.	24 October 2023

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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; and understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that staff work with children in line with the home's stated ethos and that they understand the impact abuse and neglect may have on children's behaviour. This also relates to the manager reviewing staffing levels at appropriate intervals so that children receive a level of care appropriate to their changing needs.	24 October 2023
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; 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)(a)(vii)(viii)(c))	24 October 2023

This specifically relates to recording steps taken to avoid the need to restrain a child.	
---	--

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: 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: Jamie Joinson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Kathryn Grindrod, HMI Social Care
Rebekah Tucker, HMI Social Care

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 looked after children, 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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 2023