

2591479

Registered provider: Nurture Childcare Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2020. The registered manager is currently on extended leave. The home is currently being managed by a manager who is registered to manage another home in the organisation.

There was one child living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 22 August 2023

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
22/08/2023	Full	requires improvement to be good
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: inadequate

Poor and ineffective leadership and management and safeguarding practice have had a significant impact on the experiences and progress of children living in the home.

Moves in and out of the home are poorly managed. Leaders and managers do not fully consider children's needs and risks before they move into the home. This contributed to one child's poor experience living at the home and their unplanned move on, due to staff being unable to meet their needs.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the culture and routine in the home effectively promote or support children's education. Children lack a good daily routine that enables them to achieve their full educational potential. Staff do not consistently provide children with a daily structure of education activities to support their learning and progress.

Children do not receive well-considered care and support. The quality and consistency of care plans are poor. The individual needs of children are not clearly recorded or understood by managers and staff. Care plans do not align with placing authorities' care plans. This impacts on the quality of care provided to children. For example, staff failed to address and support one child's mental health needs appropriately.

The home uses the PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) approach as the chosen model of care. However, not all staff are trained in this model of care and they do not fully understand it. As a result, staff do not have a consistent approach to the care provided to children.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are not regularly gathered to inform care planning. The voice of the child is lacking in their records. This compromises the quality of care planning for children.

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

Leaders and managers do not respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns, or implement, appropriate and safe strategies to protect children living in the home. Staff do not have sufficient guidance or supervision to ensure that they are able to manage and reduce the risks to children.

Risks to children are not identified, understood or managed by leaders, managers and staff. Staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Children's risk assessments do not inform practice because they do not include details of all known and potential risks, or contain clear strategies to manage and reduce risks. Risk management strategies are poor. Despite concerns about one child displaying self-injurious behaviours and there being a risk of ligature use, staff have not received

relevant training around ligatures. Staff do not understand what they should do in response to a ligature-use incident and are not clear on where to access ligature cutters.

A number of allegations have been made about staff and the action taken to safeguard children is unclear. Furthermore, not all allegations have been reported to the local authority designated officer. Consequently, staff continue to work with children without investigation. This places children at significant risk of harm.

The arrangements in place to manage and prevent children from going missing from home are poor. Staff do not always follow missing-from-home protocols and the records relating to incidents of going missing lack management oversight and evaluation. Although there are alarms on children's bedroom doors to act as an additional safeguarding measure, children have left the home unnoticed. Children's bedrooms are not routinely searched when they go missing from home. This means vital information about incidents is not considered as part of the missing-from-home response.

On one occasion, a child who does not live at the home and poses a potential risk to a child in the home, spent the night in another child's bedroom. Staff only became aware of this the following day. The action taken in response to this incident was poor and did not ensure that this would not happen again or that children would be safeguarded effectively.

One child caused significant damage to a member of staff's car after they had taken the car keys without the member of staff's knowledge. Although no individual came to any harm during this incident, the potential for a child or member of staff to be harmed was extremely high. Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to ensure that children do not have access to staff car keys in the future.

There was a poor response when one child received inappropriate images via social media from another child on their mobile. The child's mobile phone was removed from them as a safeguarding measure, however, this action was not evaluated by leaders and managers or explained to the child. This measure has impacted on the child's ability to communicate with close family members. However, the child still remains at risk as they have access to social media via their games console, which they use for a considerable amount of time each day.

Bullying incidents are poorly managed and there is an inadequate response to keeping children safe. One child has been assaulted by another child on a number of occasions. Staff and managers' response to these incidents is poor. One member of staff failed to take any action in response to a child being assaulted by another child. Staff were unaware of another assault on a child, despite the child having visible injuries.

Physical intervention is used to safeguard children. The physical intervention records lack clarity and evaluation. Circumstances leading up to the incident are not fully considered and are vague. There is no reflection by managers and staff to prevent repeat incidents. Furthermore, debriefs with children often lack thorough analysis and occasionally place blame on the child, meaning they do not fully understand the necessity of the

intervention. As a result, the child struggles to comprehend why the intervention was used and this does not help them to appropriately manage their emotions.

The home is not safe and repairs are not dealt with in a timely manner. The boiler door is held together with tape, which leaves the wiring and hot pipes exposed. Leaders and managers have failed to take action to make the home safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager is currently on maternity leave. The current manager is the manager of another home in the organisation and splits her time between the two homes. There is no effective management oversight of staff practice and the quality of care provided to children. This significantly compromises children's welfare and safety.

There is no demonstrated learning from safeguarding incidents. Leaders, managers and staff lack professional curiosity. There is no reflection with staff or robust evaluation of safeguarding incidents to improve the safety and welfare of children and the practices of staff. The management oversight of incident records is not sufficiently robust and lacks effective evaluation, resulting in very limited learning from incidents. Furthermore, some serious incidents have not been notified to Ofsted as required.

There is a high turnover of staff and the staffing levels are not sufficient. Staff often work long shifts alone. Some staff are inexperienced and do not hold a relevant qualification. Staff have not received safeguarding training or training specific to the needs of the children in their care. Furthermore, leaders and managers do not provide clear direction to support staff in their roles.

Leaders and managers have failed to comply with previous requirements relating to children's access to parts of their home. A bathroom door has remained locked to the child. Leaders and managers state this is due to a lack of safety restrictors on the bathroom window. This means the child cannot access all areas of their home due to staff's failure to install a window restrictor.

The quality of care review does not include the voice of the child or wider stakeholders. It also lacks evaluation and clarity regarding the aims and outcomes for the future of the home.

Ofsted has not been notified of all serious incidents as required. This compromises the regulator's oversight of the home. Additionally, the requirements raised at the last inspection have not been suitably addressed. These have been restated.

Due to the serious and widespread concerns identified, an immediate notice to suspend the registration of the home was issued. Ofsted will continue to monitor the home to ensure compliance with the suspension notice.

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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's risks are identified, assessed and managed. Staff must be provided with clear guidance and strategies to support them to manage and reduce risks to keep children safe. The registered person must ensure that the home is a safe environment and repairs are completed in a timely manner. This requirement is restated.	2 July 2024
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	2 July 2024

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 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i)(b)(v)) The registered person must ensure that room searches are completed and recorded effectively. The registered person must ensure that staff are suitably trained and confident to follow safeguarding protocols such as missing-from-home plans to avoid children being at risk of further harm. The registered person must ensure that staff apply the ethos of the home as set out in the home’s statement of purpose when working with children. This requirement is restated.	
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)) The registered person must ensure that children receive appropriate educational provision and informal learning opportunities. This requirement is restated.	2 July 2024

The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) The registered person must ensure that children's physical and emotional health needs are assessed and reviewed regularly. Timely action should be taken when concerns arise relating to children's health and development.	2 July 2024
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff—	2 July 2024

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;

communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful;

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;

strive to gain each child's respect and trust;

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;

are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;

de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;

understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and

have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.

(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)(xii)(xiii)) The registered person must ensure that relationships between children are promoted. They should ensure that bullying is not tolerated and any incidents of bullying are identified and addressed.	
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. This requirement is restated.	2 July 2024
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) The registered person must ensure that all staff are trained to meet the needs of children and safeguard them effectively. The registered person must ensure that leaders and managers have effective oversight of the home, staff practice and the care provided to children. Swift action must be taken to address any shortfalls identified.	2 July 2024

The registered person must ensure that leaders and managers support staff through regular supervision and team meetings where they can discuss and reflect on their practice. The registered person must ensure that there are a sufficient number of suitably experienced and skilled staff working at the home. This requirement is restated.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) The registered person must ensure that full consideration is given to the needs and risks to children before they move into the home. Moves out of the home should be planned when possible.	2 July 2024
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child —	2 July 2024

is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) The registered person must ensure that allegations made against staff are reported to the local authority designated officer and managed and investigated appropriately, in line with safeguarding procedures.	
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. 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.	2 July 2024

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) (5))	
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 name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; 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 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and 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)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv)) The registered person must ensure that any incidents of physical restraint are recorded in line with regulation 35.	2 July 2024

Children must also be given the opportunity to understand and reflect on physical intervention incidents.	
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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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Dale Berry

Registered manager: Sarah Dalton

Inspectors

Nichola Croft, Social Care Inspector
James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

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