

2591501

Registered provider: VCare24 Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to two children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The home was registered in July 2020 and the manager also registered with Ofsted at that time. He has the relevant leadership and management qualification.

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.

We last visited this setting on 28 February 2021, to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 June 2021

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
-----------------	-----------------	----------------------

Not applicable		
----------------	--	--

Inspection judgements

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

The children do not have consistently good experiences of care. This is because not all staff have the skills to support the children's emotions positively. On some occasions, the staff are not able to calm the children and their behaviours escalate, resulting in assaults on staff and damage to the home.

In some areas of the home there are hazards that pose a risk to the children. These include a bedroom door hanging off, and only attached to the door frame by a middle chain hinge; a carpet which is not fastened down properly, and prevents a bedroom door from opening; and an electric box with exposed live wires. These safety hazards were fixed during the inspection. Other areas of decor in the home are damaged. For example, there are two holes in the wall on the stairs, and some stained carpets. The damage looks poor and is not providing children with a homely environment. The responsible individual has recently appointed a maintenance person to address environmental issues. The impact of this appointment can not be assessed at this inspection.

The staff try to help the children to understand the importance of attending their education placements. Children who previously did not attend school now have placements. The staff's efforts to encourage the children to attend school are not always successful and the children's attendance continues to fluctuate. When the children are not attending school, this affects their daily routine and means that some children do not get out of bed until late in the day. The lack of education delays the children's learning, and stops them from realising their full potential and gaining the qualifications and skills they need for later life.

The children complete some work to help them to be as independent as possible, and are working on developing skills such as travelling independently, cooking and budgeting. Sometimes the children engage with the staff and on other occasions they choose not to do so. Staff work with children to address this reluctance.

The children complete individualised work to help them understand the importance of staying healthy. They work with a specialist nurse to ensure that their health needs are met. They complete work on topics such as sexual health and eating a balanced diet. The specialist nurse ensures that the children are able to access all of the health services they need in order to stay emotionally and physically well.

The care and support plans in place for one child do not reflect the care that the child receives. For example, these plans have not been updated to reflect the current placement, and do not detail the medication that the child needs. This lack of information means that staff are not provided with clear guidance to follow, to ensure that they provide care that meets the children's specific needs.

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

The children's risk assessments are up to date. The risk assessments inform staff how to manage the children's behaviour positively. On occasions, some staff do not follow the risk assessments to help calm the children's behaviour. Consequently, levels of violence towards staff and damage to the house increase. Some staff call the police in these situations, resulting in the children being arrested. Police involvement is not a positive experience for the children, and risks them being criminalised.

When the children go missing from the home, there are detailed plans for staff to follow to help them find the children. The staff work closely with the police to make sure that the children are found quickly. On one occasion, the staff did not follow a child's plan to go out to look for them. Not following the child's plan prevents the child, who is at a risk of exploitation, from being found quickly.

The children learn about risks and how to stay safe. Some risks to the children have reduced, such as risks associated with the use of illegal substances. The children complete individualised work to help them understand dangers and risks to their safety. The work they complete includes staying safe online, the risks of substance misuse and how to recognise safe and unsafe relationships.

When allegations are made or safeguarding issues arise, action is taken quickly to report issues to the relevant professionals. The registered manager makes sure that the children are protected while any investigations take place. One safeguarding professional commented, 'Communication is good and they deal with any issues appropriately.'

The signing-in system for visitors takes staff an excessive amount of time to complete. The times that visitors are logged in and out of the home are not always recorded accurately. Should any safeguarding issues occur while visitors are on site, this lack of accurate information will hinder the registered manager's ability to assess who is in the home at the time.

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

The registered manager is dedicated to improving the care that is provided for the children. The registered manager and the responsible individual know the strengths of the home and know areas they need to develop. Work has very recently started on developing the staff's skills in behaviour management, improving the maintenance of the home and addressing the signing-in system. This work is not yet embedded or effective.

The manager's monitoring systems are weak. The gaps in oversight prevent the registered manager from identifying issues swiftly. The lack of effective monitoring

means that he is not able to fully analyse the care provided. For example, a care plan is out of date, which prevents him from assessing if the level of care is still right for the child. In relation to the use of medication, the monitoring systems are not tracking patterns and trends in the use of occasional 'as and when' medication. This hinders care that is provided for the children.

The staff receive regular supervision. This supervision reflects their role and the children's progress. The staff are well supported by the registered manager and feel that they can talk to him about their concerns or issues when they wish to. The registered manager's supervision is not consistent and he has not received formal supervision in the last two months. This is a lost opportunity to reflect on practice and improve the care that is provided for the children.

Constant changes in the staff team due to sickness, staff holidays and unforeseen events result in staff from the organisation's other homes providing cover in this home. While the registered manager tries to ensure that the children know the staff, it is not always possible to provide a constant core staff team. The changes affect the consistency and quality of the care that children receive.

The registered manager's review of the quality of care cannot be assessed at this inspection. This report has not been sent to Ofsted. The independent visitor's report does not fully support the registered manager to identify shortfalls in practice, such as gaps in management monitoring systems. This reduces the manager's ability to assess the impact that care has on the children.

The statement of purpose does not adequately reflect the care the children receive. The statement of purpose does not provide enough detail on the approach to behaviour support. It does not include information about the home's main door alarms, which monitor the children entering and leaving the property. The lack of information means that placing authorities are not provided with sufficient detail to enable them to fully assess the care that can be provided. Furthermore, an updated statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted.

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 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))	30 July 2021
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 the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(h))	30 July 2021
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to— a person who works at the home;	30 July 2021

a child, or a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered; a parent of a child, or a parent of a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered; a child's placing authority; and in the case of a qualifying school, the Secretary of State. (Regulation 16 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) In particular, ensure that the statement of purpose accurately reflects the home's approach to behaviour management, and the home's approach to the monitoring and surveillance of children.	
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; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that the children's plans always reflect the care the children receive, including their current medication needs.	30 July 2021
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b))	30 July 2021
Regulation 45 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. (Regulation 45 (4))	30 July 2021
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	30 July 2021

In particular, ensure that the registered manager receives regular supervision in line with company policy.	
---	--

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2591501

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: VCare24 Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 18, Becklands Park, York Road, Market Weighton, York YO43 3GA

Responsible individual: Victoria Simpson

Registered manager: Paul Romans

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector

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 children looked after, 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 2021