

2592713

Registered provider: Homes for Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to five children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (social and emotional difficulties). The site consists of a main house and an annexe.

An interim manager is in post covering maternity leave until March 2022.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

The home has been visited on 4 and 22 December 2020. We last visited this setting on 4 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit following compliance activity. The report is published on the Ofsted website. This is the home's first full inspection following registration.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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

Not previously inspected.

Inspection judgements

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

The overall experience for the children in this home requires improvement. Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke to all of the children and observed relations between staff and children.

The home is clean, tidy and presentable. The internal design and decor of the home is of a high standard, but lacks a homely appeal. Managers informed the inspector that there are plans to soften the interior with suitable soft furnishings.

Children told the inspector that they are happy living in the home and staff encourage children to engage in a range of activities. Children have an opportunity to talk about their worries and concerns through detailed key-work sessions. The inspector observed polite and respectful relationships between staff and children.

Two of the children living in the home are attending mainstream education. Despite some difficulties with peers in school, staff encourage children to attend school to help resolve conflicts as soon as possible. There is evidence of good working relationships between staff and school. A social worker reported good communication between the home and the placing local authority.

Children have an opportunity to talk about their emotions and talk about difficult feelings and thoughts. Staff are nurturing and supportive towards children. Some children have additional therapeutic support in school. Children say that they find this support helpful. Some children, who have in the past had caring responsibilities for their younger siblings, require additional assurances to alleviate their worries.

Children who are at risk of criminal activity have not maintained their education and/or training opportunities. No additional tutoring has been provided in a timely manner. The impact of no education, and lack of structure to the day, have led to the continuation of children being at risk of criminal exploitation and engaging in criminal activity.

The daily lived experience for children engaged in criminal activity and criminal exploitation requires improvement. Children continue to engage in criminal activity and there is insufficient monitoring of external factors and influences to ensure that children are safe during their free-time activities. A child has been assaulted on two occasions in the community by unknown males.

Staff have observed a decline in a child's emotional presentation. Paraphernalia linked to criminal activity, such as knives and evidence of drugs misuse, has been found in a child's bedroom.

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

There is evidence of good multi-agency networking and communication with key stakeholders. Professional meetings with youth justice, police and social workers take place to help manage high-risk behaviours associated with children engaged in criminal activity. Professional feedback about the home is good and there is evidence of good partnership working relationships with key stakeholders.

Staff are unable to provide effective help and protection to a child engaged with criminal exploitation. Visual checks in the community conducted by staff do not have a positive effect. A child has been seen getting into cars that are unknown to staff and returning to the home under the influence of drugs.

Staff are not hypervigilant in checking to ensure that no illegal substances are transported to and from the home. Children have been able to leave the home at night without the knowledge of staff. One child was able to bring an unknown peer into the home during the night, despite staff being on duty.

Monitoring of phone use for children at risk of criminal exploitation is not effective. Staff have no method of monitoring a child's engagement with the wider community through acceptable mobile phone use. Lack of monitoring continues to place this child at risk of criminal exploitation and engagement in criminal activity.

Missing from care information is recorded in detail, and police and professionals are appropriately notified. Return home interviews are conducted by an independent agency. Despite suitable interventions, there has not been a decline in episodes of missing from home.

Thorough matching of residents and the potential effects of risks and behaviours between peers have not been effective. This has resulted in several significant bullying incidents between two residents. De-escalation techniques were ineffective to manage the incidents. Restorative measures, such as reparation work between peers to help maintain healthy relationships, or discussions for children to reflect on the impact of their behaviours, were not conducted. Consequently, children do not understand the effects that their behaviour has on others.

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

The interim manager and her deputy manager evidence good partnership working as senior leaders in the home. There is evidence of clear and detailed recordings on file. Electronic filing systems are up to date.

Following an incident of a child smoking in his bedroom, and consequently tampering with his smoke alarm, the manager was unable to provide evidence to demonstrate

that the smoke alarms had been tested. The manager is required to efficiently evidence their knowledge of updated fire risk assessments following maintenance. The inspector was provided with suitable post-inspection evidence that provided assurances that suitable checks were complete.

Staff report that they feel supported by their managers. Staff enjoy coming to work and are committed to supporting vulnerable children. Staff have regular supervision and staff complete reflective supervision that details in-depth discussions regarding the progress of children. All staff are required to complete training in a wide range of subject areas.

Risk factors concerning child exploitation are understood by staff, but the understanding of underlying psychological behaviours of children who present with high-risk criminal engagement requires improvement. This would ensure that staff and managers have a greater understanding of the risk factors and behaviour traits of children engaged in criminal activity if implementation of behaviour management plans are to be successful.

External monitoring of the home is provided by an independent person. The independent person does not routinely capture the view of professionals, children and family members. Therefore, those who have regular contact with the home, or live in the home, are unable to share their views and experiences. Broader oversight that regularly captures the views of family members, professionals and children is required to ensure effective monitoring and improvement of the home.

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 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; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	30 April 2022
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;	30 April 2022

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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))	
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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	30 April 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;

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;

demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received;

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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))

Recommendations

- The registered manager must ensure that the environment meets the needs of the children. In most cases, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person must ensure that the necessary support is given to children to continue their education or training. Support may include, for example, putting in place practical arrangements such as a tutor. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the standards', page 28, paragraph 5.13)

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: 2592713

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes for Support Limited

Registered provider address: 1st Floor, Cloister House, Riverside, New Bailey Street, Manchester M3 5FS

Responsible individual: Peter Rowlinson

Registered manager: Carlie Jones

Inspector

Kamal Bhamra, Social Care Inspector

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