

2592750

Registered provider: Break

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This charity-run home provides care for up to two children who may have experienced neglect, abuse or trauma, along with family and placement breakdowns.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2023.

Inspection date: 23 February 2023

Date of last inspection: 5 December 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. The children did not wish to share their views with the inspector.

Staff prioritise children's education. One child has had some recent challenges at school which have affected their attendance. Staff have worked with the child to help them to overcome these challenges. The child's views are communicated to the school effectively. The manager is working with the school to improve the child's attendance, and to consider the best approaches to working with him both at home and school.

Since the last inspection, both children have been away on separate holidays. The children chose their holiday destinations. One child enjoyed a week in Tenerife and another visited the Peak District. One child had an overnight trip to London with their key worker, which they enjoyed. Children spending time with staff demonstrates the positive relationships they have with them, and shows that they enjoy the company of staff.

Staff have made improvements to the home environment. New photos of children enjoying trips with staff are displayed in communal areas. This has helped to give the house a more homely feel.

Children's views about their care are regularly sought. Regular key-work sessions cover a wide range of topics. These include challenges around peer relationships, trips children would like to participate in and their health needs. Staff respond appropriately, ensuring that any issues children raise are addressed.

The safety of children

The staff ensure that clear boundaries relating to substance misuse are upheld. The staff carry out regular checks of the home to ensure that one child does not use cannabis at the home. Further work has been undertaken with the child in relation to the dangers of substance misuse, and they have been given the opportunity to engage in a substance misuse service. The child's risk assessment has been updated to reflect potential risks relating to driving under the influence of substances. It now contains clear strategies for staff to manage this risk.

Incidents of restraint are rare. There has been one incident since the last inspection. This was proportionate and necessary to keep staff safe. However, some of the recording of the follow-up conversations with the child was unclear in terms of the time frames. Following the incident, the child involved alleged that they had been

harmed during the restraint. Managers responded to this concern appropriately, ensuring that the information was shared with the child's social worker and the local authority designated officer. An internal investigation was undertaken, which was thorough and sought the views of the child. Some areas for learning, in particular in relation to records of the incident and follow up to the incident, were identified, and actions have been taken in response to these. However, managers failed to notify Ofsted of the allegation. This affected Ofsted's ability to oversee the home effectively.

One child was involved in an incident where they were assaulted in the local community. Following the incident, the child was encouraged to access appropriate medical treatment, and work was undertaken with them in relation to community risks. However, the incident was not immediately reported to police due to the child's reluctance. This failed to ensure that information relating to this crime was shared at the earliest opportunity and could potentially have affected the subsequent police investigation.

One child has been reported missing from home on three occasions since the last inspection. Staff have responded to these incidents appropriately. They look for the child and report them missing to police in line with their agreed plans. Managers are working with the network of professionals around the child to consider risks in these incidents and how they can be managed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Leaders and managers have taken steps to address the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. They have a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. Additional resources have been provided to support the manager to make necessary improvements. These include the redeployment of some experienced staff to the home, after managers identified that the staff team would benefit from greater experience.

Managers have made improvements to monitoring of the home. Management oversight of incidents has improved, with a greater level of curiosity as to how staff have managed these, and ensuring that this is made clear in their reviews. Oversight of children's risk assessments has improved. Risk assessments are updated frequently and include strategies to manage all identified risks for children. However, the quality of recording is mixed. Some records are unclear about the follow-up actions that are taken after incidents.

There have been some concerns since the last inspection in relation to staff conduct. These were clearly and quickly addressed. This resulted in some staff changes and children have been supported in regard to these.

There are clear processes for the recruitment of staff. However, on one occasion, no check was undertaken on the reason why a staff member left recent employment in a role working with vulnerable adults. This failed to ensure that any possible concerns relating to this role were explored by managers.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/07/2021	Full	Good

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 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)) In particular, ensure that when children are thought to have been victims of crime, police are contacted without delay.	27 March 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home— if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that—	27 March 2023

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	27 March 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2592750

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich, Norfolk
NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Rachel Leslie

Registered manager: Ashley Jarman

Inspector

Joe Matkar-Cox, Social Care Inspector

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