

2592781

Registered provider: Pelican Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care and support for up to two children.

The manager has been in post since 2020. She is also the manager of another home run by the organisation.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspection of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Ofsted last visited this service on 23 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. This report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 June 2021

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 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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children have not been kept safe, and leaders and managers do not maintain sufficient oversight, or undertake appropriate monitoring, of the home. As a result, the overall experience and progress of children is inadequate.

Children have positive relationships with staff. One child was seen to enjoy spending time with staff, while another child prefers to spend time with the registered manager and responsible individual, having limited relationships with other staff. As a result, one child will only contact the registered manager when they are missing from home.

Children's health care plans are not always clear and do not always reflect the children's needs. One child's health care plan does not contain up-to-date details of all their health care needs or provide clear plans for staff to follow in order to meet the child's needs appropriately. This child does not always receive consistent help and support, such as their understanding of sexual health and taking prescribed medication.

Care plans do not acknowledge the uniqueness and needs of each child. Consequently, children are not receiving care and support that meets their individual needs. Some staff have not had training in autism spectrum disorder to help them to understand how to meet the needs of children in their care.

Care plans are not sufficiently clear about the planning and arrangements when children spend time with their families and friends. In particular, the records do not identify known concerns and risks or any steps to reduce those concerns and risks to keep children safer.

Despite some direct-work sessions being completed with children, the quality of these sessions is poor. They are ineffective, children's behaviours do not change, and they remain at risk. Professionals commented on the lack of progress for children in relation to their understanding of the risks that they face in the community.

One child has just left school, although staff have applied for college placements, he does not yet have a college placement for September. Another child has recently been excluded from school and staff have been successful in securing an alternative provision for the child swiftly.

The organisation has developed a mentoring scheme for children to learn skills and gain experience, which could be beneficial in helping children to secure future employment. However, the details of this scheme are unclear, as were the specific plans and expectations for children involved in the mentoring scheme.

Children live in a warm, welcoming family environment. Children have personalised their bedrooms, which reflect their individuality and personality.

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

Risk management plans are not effective. This is because they fail to identify all the known risks and the action that needs to be taken to reduce risk. Direct work carried out with children to help them understand behaviours and associated risks is inconsistent and does not directly address the concerns. These weaknesses fail to effectively educate children so that they learn to keep themselves safer.

One child is at significant risk of criminal exploitation, particularly as the child is frequently missing from home. The child regularly travels back to their home area by train despite not having a ticket to travel. The child only keeps in minimal contact with staff until they are ready to come home. Although staff take steps to help the child to return home, there is little proactive work taking place in an attempt to prevent the child from going missing and placing themselves at risk. This is a missed opportunity to minimise risk for the child and to help them to understand the risks associated with being missing from home.

At times, staff are unaware of the child's whereabouts and who they are associating with when they are missing. The risks associated with one child being exploited while missing have risen significantly in recent weeks as staff and professionals do not always know where the child is staying. Although the manager has raised concerns with the placing authority regarding meetings that are taking place about the child without staff from the home being present, there has been a delay in rectifying this issue.

Staff's response to incidents indicates that they do not have a secure understanding of safeguarding and child protection procedures. A significant incident had not been notified to Ofsted. Records confirmed that the police were notified but fail to demonstrate the action that staff took following the incident, including discussion with the child to understand the risks.

There have been three occasions when staff have found inappropriate images, videos and applications on a child's phone. Staff removed the images and applications from the phone. However, the risk assessments were not updated as a result of these incidents to provide staff with strategies to keep the child safer, nor was there any evidence of specific direct work to help the child understand the risks. Recordings relating to the incidents failed to demonstrate a robust approach to managing the concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Monitoring and oversight by the registered manager and the independent person are poor and have failed to identify the shortfalls highlighted at this inspection. The

manager's review of the quality of care does not include what has changed as a result of consultation with children and others.

The responsible individual places great emphasis on the mentoring programme that they have established. However, the details of the programme are unclear and, as a result, the impact that it may have on the children is uncertain.

Several staff have not yet had training which reflects the statement of purpose or the needs of the children being cared for. Of the staff employed, only two have a level 3 qualification, with the remaining staff working towards this. Some staff have not received training in relation to autism spectrum disorder, which is a known condition for one of the children.

Staff are now able to access the 'training hub', which provides a range of training opportunities for staff. However, there is no system in place to monitor the effectiveness of the training or staff's competence in these areas. The workforce development plan is out of date.

The assessments completed to assess the effect from children moving into the home are ineffective and do not take into consideration all the known risks of the child who is moving into the home or the risks of the children already living here.

Arrangements for children who are returning to their family homes are not well planned and fail to adequately prepare children for this significant change in their life. In addition, when a child was unhappy with such a decision, there was limited action by the manager or staff to ensure that the child's views are fully considered.

Overall, record-keeping is poor. Records and documentation fail to show the discussions held with children to identify the actions that need to be taken to keep them safe or to make progress. The recording system is not helpful in telling the story of the child's time in the home.

Records do not contain all the required information in line with regulation, and, at times, the language used is inappropriate. For example, the use of the word promiscuity to describe a child's behaviour is unacceptable and demonstrates a lack of understanding around the child's needs and the risk of child sexual exploitation.

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 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— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(iv)(vi))	23 July 2021
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 each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;	23 July 2021

help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ix))	
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 and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(iv))	23 July 2021
*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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;	2 July 2021

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi))	
*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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; 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)(c)(f)(h))	2 July 2021
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 arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and	23 July 2021

plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii))	
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 — 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))	23 July 2021
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. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b))	23 July 2021

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that inflammatory language, such as the words promiscuity, absconding and lying, is not used to describe children's behaviour. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that the children's records tell the story of their time in the home and acknowledge the significant contribution they play in the child's history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: 2592781

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pelican Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: V12 Suite H, Merlin Park, Ringtail Road, Burscough, Lancashire L40 8JY

Responsible individual: Thomas Ghannad

Registered manager: Rebecca Gregg

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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