

# 2594233

Registered provider: Children & Adolescents Placement Provisions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have emotional, behavioural, and social difficulties.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since November 2022. A manager has been recruited but is yet to register with Ofsted.

There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

### Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2024

**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:** 3 May 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            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 03/05/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 05/07/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 18/05/2022      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 15/06/2021      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are not in healthy routines. They spend a lot of time upstairs and generally come down only for meals. One child said that there is little to come downstairs for as the lounge is not homely. Another child said that he 'games, eats, repeats' and when not gaming he is on his phone to friends or watching YouTube. He is often online through the night. The manager states that children used to do activities outside of the home, but this has reduced in recent months. Staff try to do activities with children; however, this is only happening occasionally. As such children do not have experiences which could develop their self-confidence or new skills.

The home is clean and tidy, however there is little personalisation of shared areas. For example, no photographs or pictures are displayed on the walls. There has been delay to some internal repairs. One child's room was in a poor condition. It was untidy and there were holes in the wall which had not been repaired following an incident. Once discovered some of the issues were rectified. Children do not have access to the lounge and kitchen at night as they are locked. This arrangement has been in place for some time and has become routine. The arrangement is not reviewed as children's needs change.

The manager and staff do not have effective strategies in place to help children attend education. Children do not attend health appointments and are not taking their prescribed medication. Again, efforts are made to encourage children but there has been little progress. One child has an allergy which has not been reviewed by a medical professional for some time. This is important as the manager was unsure if he requires medication should he have an allergic reaction.

Children are supported to see their friends and family. One child who rarely goes out has recently started to see a friend. Another child has a relative who is currently unwell. The manager ensures that the child sees him regularly. This is important in minimising the child's current anxiety.

Professionals speak positively about the care of the children. Social workers state that there have been areas of progress. Examples are children beginning to trust the staff team because the provider does not 'give up easily' on them. One child has made positive changes to his behaviour. Another child has a plan in place to return to his parents. He is very happy about this, and the manager is supporting him with this important transition.

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

Children have built trusting relationships with some staff. They named the manager as someone who they can talk to. Children know they will not be judged or rejected, for example, if they have been missing from home. As such children have somewhere safe to come home to. One child has made progress in terms of reducing risk of exploitation through joint work with police and specialist services. There is evidence of some good multi agency work regarding this issue.

The manager and staff have awareness of the risks posed to and from children. Risk management plans are created for a range of needs and situations. However, plans are not always being followed or updated. For example, a child's nut allergy risk assessment says the child needs to see a GP, but this has not yet happened. There is a fire safety risk assessment for another child which includes measures relating to previous concerns about fire setting. These measures are no longer required. Inaccurate information can cause confusion for staff about how to manage risks, especially when new staff start.

One child is regularly missing from home overnight. He is returning to his hometown. The manager and staff ensure that relevant professionals are informed, and they undertake welfare checks by phone. However, they do not have a relationship with the child's mother which would be helpful in terms of sharing information about the child's safety and whereabouts. Staff respond well to another child when he is missing, and these incidents are generally well recorded. Not all children are having return home interviews with an independent professional which is a missed opportunity to better understand the reasons for children going missing.

The manager has not fully addressed some issues in relation to children's safety. She is not yet confident that all children are safe online. One child has recently received several devices from family. The manager is working with the child's local authority to address the level of online activity; however, this is a work in progress. Children are smoking cannabis and not all of them have received an adequate response to this.

Children are not regularly taking part in fire evacuation practices. Staff have completed some direct work with children regarding fire safety however this is not a regular occurrence. Despite this, children are aware of how to leave the property and where to go if there is a fire. This is important as children do smoke and may own sources of ignition.

Restraints are used as a last resort to prevent harm to children and staff. Records sampled contained some useful recording, however there was also some unclear description of how incidents had been managed. One incident did not have any management oversight which could have identified areas for improvements to practice. For example, a child had sustained a scratch during an incident but there was no evidence of this being discussed with the child or an opportunity offered to make a complaint.

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

The registered manager's post has been vacant since 2022. There has been some instability in the management of the home. The manager has been in post for some time but has not yet registered with Ofsted. She is currently working towards applying to register however there have been some delays to this process being completed. The manager has taken some time off due to unforeseen health circumstances. On her return the covering manager and several staff had left. As a result, the manager is now in the position of recruiting new staff to re-establish a full team which is cohesive in the care they provide for children.

The manager recognises that there needs to be improvements in the home. She is trying to achieve this but there have been some setbacks. She now has a new deputy who brings energy and new ideas which could help to make progress. The manager's priorities are to ensure children's health and education needs are met as well as helping children to establish better routines. Following inspection, the manager acknowledges that despite some advocacy, work with external agencies is not always effective to achieve change for children.

Children's meetings have not been happening regularly. This limits the opportunities for children to give their views and influence the way the home is managed. Managers have plans in place to revive children's meetings with the intention of increasing children's engagement with staff.

Staff say they are happy working at the home. They feel supported by the manager and there is evidence of increased support if staff experience personal issues. Staff receive training and supervision discussions to help them meet children's needs. New staff have recently been appointed through safe recruitment processes. They receive a helpful induction into their role. Changes in the staff team mean that consistency in care is not yet in place for children.

## 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      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>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—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p> <p>This particularly refers to ensuring risk assessments are accurate and any advice is followed. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is re-stated.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                           | 6 August 2024 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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))</p> <p>This specifically refers to ensuring robust quality assurance and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that children's needs are met and identified improvements are implemented. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is re-stated.</p> | 6 August 2024 |

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| <p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to involve each child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child’s needs;</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child’s needs are met in accordance with the child’s relevant plans; and</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children’s home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to working with local authorities to build relationships with children’s families to enable working together to meet children’s needs and ensure their wellbeing. This also related to finding effective strategies to ensure children’s health needs are met by relevant professionals. In situations where the provider is unhappy with services escalation of concerns happens in a timely way.</p> | <p>27 August 2024</p> |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—<br/>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>27 August 2024</p> |

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| <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring children are regularly engaged in education and help them overcome any difficulties they have in achieving this.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                              |             |
| <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must —</p> <p>ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, that children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that children consistently take part in fire evacuation practices and have regular discussions about how to exit the home in the event of a fire.</p> | 9 July 2024 |

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to their behaviour. Homes must also meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. Information on restraint and deprivation of liberty is contained in the protection of children section of the Guide from paragraph 9.41. (Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

- The registered person should ensure that children's homes staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. (Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
- The registered person should encourage children to share any concerns about their care or other matters as soon as they arise. Children must be able to take up issues or make a complaint with support and reminded of the complaints procedure as necessary (Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. (Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

## **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:** 2594233

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Children & Adolescents Placement Provisions Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Barratt House Office G3a, Kingsthorpe Road,  
Northampton NN2 6EZ

**Responsible individual:** Nadine Morgan

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector  
Netsai Muzuva, Social Care Inspector

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