

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 was registered on 12 August 2020 and it provides care for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted at the same time as the home was registered. She holds the required 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 27 January 2021 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the home's first full inspection since registration. There are three children living at the home. They are all settled and are making progress. The children say that they feel happy and safe.

There was a delay in education provision being allocated for the children, despite the home identifying suitable alternatives. Following the last Ofsted visit, the manager escalated her concerns. This led to the children being allocated educational placements that included the suggested provisions.

The children now benefit from having established routines and structure to their day. Each child has education provision and a timetable that meets their specific educational needs. Their participation in educational activities is enabling them to be more positive about the future. One child described feeling motivated to complete his education because he has secured an apprenticeship which is due to start in September. This is particularly impressive given that he said that he was not interested in education prior to moving to this home.

The children have developed positive relationships with the staff and with each other. For one child, this is their longest placement. This child's social worker praised the team's work. Other feedback about the care provided is mixed. In particular, there were concerns that some of the expectations placed on children are unrealistic for their age. These include children managing a budget and taking responsibility for cooking meals. This is working well for one child who is close to moving into an independent setting. This child spoke about enjoying planning and cooking his own meals and doing his own shopping. The manager recognises that further discussions are needed to agree and/or clarify expectations. For example, a parent was concerned that their child had to prepare his own meals each night. Staff are clear that children only cook their own meals every night if that is their preference and it has been agreed in advance.

Children's views are used to shape how things are done in the home. An example of this is children asking to store their food separately to other children or the rest of the house. The unintended consequence of this is that the home feels less like a typical family home, despite the home being furnished and decorated to a good standard. Managers are exploring how they can ensure that the home retains a family feel while still responding to the children's requests. This review also includes the provision of over-the-counter remedies as children have been using their funds to purchase these when they should be provided by the home.

Children are encouraged and supported to attend medical appointments. Children have regular, informal sessions with the in-house clinical team. The clinical team then use the knowledge gained in the sessions to shape support, behaviour management and sensory plans to meet the children's specific needs.

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

Children and their key staff work closely to reflect on the times when children may have been at risk. These ongoing conversations help children to recognise risk and begin to reduce incidents of potential harm. A child's social worker praised the staff for the work that they have carried out to address and reduce risks of criminal exploitation for the child.

Children have limited time alone outside of the home. This is gradually increased in negotiation with each child and all responsible for their care. A child spoke about how much better things are for him now that he is living in a new area. He stated that this is because he no longer gets drawn into inappropriate or risk-taking behaviour.

Children rarely go missing from home. When this has occurred, it has been for a minimal amount of time. Staff take appropriate actions to encourage the children to return and they carry out follow-up work to address why they went missing.

There has been a significant decrease in incidents at the home. Staff use a restorative approach with children, and this is working well. There have been no physical interventions since the last visit.

There has been one complaint, which was made by a child. Although the complaint was later retracted, the matter was fully investigated and followed up with the relevant external agencies and the staff member concerned. This demonstrated to the child that he was listened to and that any issues raised will be responded to appropriately.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is committed to the home and the children. The staff describe the manager as experienced and supportive. There has been a relatively high turnover of staff. This has included staff who realised that they may not be suited to working in residential care. The manager has worked closely with the team to ensure that staffing changes have a minimal effect on children or the remaining staff.

The manager has a clear overview of the progress that children make. She is in the process of establishing the best way to share this information with families and external agencies. Following the completion of the home's first quality-of-care report, the manager is in the process of reviewing much of the documentation. Examples of this include the home's location risk assessment and various policy documents. This is to ensure that policies are updated to include any risks that have arisen, or points from learning since the home opened.

One policy that is being updated is the supervision agreement. A sample of staff files demonstrated that staff receive monthly supervision. However, there was a failure to

recognise the additional support some staff may require when they start working in the home, particularly if they are new to regulated childcare.

Children are cared for by staff from a range of ages, genders, and ethnicities and this promotes the children's awareness of difference and diversity.

Following the last visit, the manager addressed the shortfalls identified in relation to children's education and access to independent advocacy.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities are met. This includes the provision of remedies such as over-the-counter medicines and painkillers. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that the home minimises measures that give the home an 'institutional' feel. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that plans to prepare children to live independently (including developing practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care) are agreed with the child, their family and professionals as applicable. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- The registered person should incorporate into the organisation's policies, procedures and statement of purpose, the need for additional staff supervision sessions during the probation period. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 40 Harpur Street, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK40 2QT

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Shajadha Begum

Inspector

Sonia Hay, Social Care Inspector

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