

2594233

Registered provider: Children & Adolescents Placement Provisions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home was registered on 12 August 2020. It provides care for up to four children with emotional and social difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted at the same time as the home was registered. She holds the required management qualification.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 May 2022

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/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 15 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The leadership and management of this home is inadequate, with particularly poor practice in respect of management oversight and recording procedures. Systems that should ensure the safe running of the home are not working well. This includes the recording of incidents, and maintenance at the home. Some gaps in recording raise concerns about the robustness of staff responses to safeguarding incidents.

The children's home is not well maintained and does not present as homely. Some areas of the home are in a poor condition. Graffiti and damage to furniture have been left unaddressed in bedrooms and communal areas. The maintenance book is not kept up to date, and the manager was not aware of some of the damage. The home conditions impact on the overall experiences of the children.

Children benefit from the provision of an in-house therapist. Creative art therapy is provided in-house, with work rooted in psychotherapy. The therapist has been involved in setting up educational placements for the children. This has been successful with two of the children in work-based placements and apprenticeships. One young person has a part-time education timetable in specialist provisions and projects. Another child, who came to the home more recently, currently has no education provision. However, the staff are working closely with the local authority and a tutor will be provided soon.

The children are encouraged and supported to attend regular health checks. These include appointments with doctors, dentists and opticians. However, some children continue to smoke and use alcohol and illegal substances. Staff are in the process of developing close working relationships with specialist providers of help and support in this area. The home's policies in relation to substance misuse do not provide guidance for staff in how to respond to children using illegal substances. Not all staff, or managers, are fully aware of the home's policies. As a result, the help children receive to lead a healthier lifestyle is insufficient.

House meetings between children and staff no longer take place. These meetings were felt to be ineffective. The decision was made to use individual key-work sessions instead, and the number of key-working sessions has increased. However, records of these sessions need to clearly record children's wishes and feelings regarding life at the home and show how they are included in decision-making.

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

The decision-making process regarding admissions to the home requires improvement. Some admission decisions have been made contrary to the registered manager's view about the staff and whether they have the ability to meet children's

needs. Consequently, some admissions have resulted in poor outcomes for children, who have not always been helped and protected.

Staff do not have the skills and confidence to address children's behaviour and support them consistently. Decisions are not always made in the best interests of all of the children in the home. Again, this does not always help children and it can impair their experiences of living at this home.

Recording of incidents needs improvement. Records are not clear or accurate. Actions following incidents, including the manager's oversight, are not always recorded. Further actions have at times been identified but not completed. As a result, children and staff do not learn from incidents. Children are not helped to make different, safer choices.

Children have been at risk while being missing from the home. Records do not always indicate if staff have actively looked for them. Records do not always indicate whether an independent return home interview has taken place or has been offered. Therefore, managers cannot identify if all actions have taken place to help children and reduce further risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Management oversight of incidents is weak. Incident forms are not signed by the manager. Actions identified by the manager, such as in discussions in a team meeting or through one-to-one work with a child, have not been completed. The manager has not ensured that all incidents have been notified in line with regulation. This increases the risk of the same things happening repeatedly.

Outcomes of investigations are not always recorded. Information contained in emails has not been added to records. Therefore, this information would not be accessible to independent visitors or inspectors if the manager was not present.

The manager does not have a monitoring and review system in place. As a result, it is difficult for the manager to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.

A new electronic case recording system is to be introduced at the home soon. Once staff are trained, this will allow most records to be produced and kept online. This will aid the recording of, and access to, records.

Supervision sessions are not taking place in line with the frequency outlined in the home's policy. Therefore, staff are not having the opportunity to reflect on and develop their practice one-to-one with a manager.

The manager has not always had the level of support required. This has limited the opportunities for the manager to develop and make improvements. A head of care is now in post. However, this increase in management capacity has yet to deliver any meaningful improvement.

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 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)) This particularly refers to staff being skilled and confident in challenging and dealing with inappropriate and risky behaviour.	1 July 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d)) This particularly refers to recording damage in the home's maintenance book and ensuring the home is kept in a good and safe state of repair.	1 July 2022
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—	1 July 2022

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)) This particularly refers to the need for the registered manager to monitor all aspects of the service and address the shortfalls without delay.	
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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This particularly refers to the need to address poor admission processes, and to only admit children that the registered manager is confident they can care for well and meet their needs.	1 July 2022
Statement of purpose The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)) This particularly refers to any revised statement of purpose being submitted to HMCI within 28 days and containing the correct information, such as staffing.	1 July 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and	1 July 2022

have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This particularly refers to supervision of staff taking place in line with the home's policy of a minimum of six times a year.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. Case records must be kept— securely in the children's home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there (Regulation 36 (1) (b)(c) (2)(d)) This particularly refers to all records, especially incident reports, being signed and kept up to date, with updates and outcomes recorded with the records and not kept solely in manager's emails.	1 July 2022
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)) This particularly refers to an incident that the registered manager agreed should have been sent as a notification.	1 July 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should be aware that, in some instances, a child may express wishes that are not always in their best interests or which may conflict with the views of other children in the home. In such circumstances, the responsible adults will have to balance the wishes of the child against what they judge to be in the best interests of the child, and reach a reasonable view about the best way forward in the interests of all. The reasons for reaching any decision will need to be carefully explained to and understood by the child or children concerned. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 22, paragraph 4.9)
- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being. Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and, where necessary, work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- 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. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: Esther Parent

Registered manager: Shajadha Begum

Inspector

Shaun Caplis, Social Care Inspector

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