

2595340

Registered provider: Champion Children (Fig Tree) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four children. The provider states in the home's statement of purpose that it provides care for children who have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The registered manager post has been vacant since June 2021.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 May 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 2 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were two children living in this home at the time of this inspection. Both children spoke to the inspector about their experiences of living in this home. Children say they are happy in this home.

Leaders, managers and staff forge strong relationships with children. These relationships play a vital part in supporting children through their day-to-day life.

Children are supported extremely well to learn more about their culture and identity. For example, one child is supported to explore and celebrate all the different aspects of his identity. This has helped the child to develop a sense of acceptance and belonging in the home. An independent reviewing officer said, 'Staff members are from different races and sexual orientation and this has been a breath of fresh air for him [the child].'

Children benefit from regular, individualised, creative and good-quality direct-work sessions. Staff regularly support children in learning useful life skills that help them to achieve their targets. However, full and detailed records of these sessions are not consistent in quality or content. This does not capture children's day-to-day experiences in the home or evidence the good progress they make.

Children spoken to said that they like living in the home. Children are regularly given opportunities to share their views and staff act on these views where appropriate. Complaints are managed well. However, records of complaints do not include full details of all the actions that managers take to resolve complaints.

Children generally make good progress from their starting points. However, one child has refused to return to the home from her family time, and this has impacted on her progress. Staff have made concerted efforts to encourage the child to return. The child said to the inspector, 'I like it at the home. I felt safe here, it's quite big and nice, but I want to be close to my family and in a semi-independent home.'

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

Risk assessments and behaviour management plans comprehensively explore children's risks or vulnerabilities. These plans include strategies to help staff to manage and reduce risk. Consequently, significant behaviour incidents have reduced.

Staff understand children's individual needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Staff use this informed knowledge to help children to make safe decisions. When children go missing from the home, staff take prompt action. Staff follow children's missing-from-care plans as set out by the placing authority. Leaders, managers and staff explore emerging risks, such as child exploitation, and seek specialist support for

children. However, leaders and managers have failed to escalate the lack of communication and inadequate response from a placing authority to senior leaders. This has a potential impact on safeguarding the child effectively.

Staff help to keep children safe from bullying. For example, when one child reported that they are bullied at school, staff took action to explore and address this with the school. Furthermore, staff supported the child with learning through direct work.

Staff only use physical restraint when it is necessary to safeguard children and others. Following incidents of restraint, children receive good support which enables them to reflect on their emotions.

Staff recruitment is safe and prevents unsuitable people from working at the home. This helps to ensure the safety of children.

Allegations against staff are managed well. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the policies and procedures relating to the management of allegations against senior staff and whistle-blowing procedures. This helps staff to keep children safe.

The home had one whistle-blowing concern since the last inspection. This was unrelated to the safeguarding of children, or the quality of care that children receive. This incident was managed well by the responsible individual and all affected staff were supported well.

Staff receive training in the safe administration of medication, and managers routinely carry out audits of medication records. However, despite this quality assurance measure, errors in administration and recording continue to be missed.

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

The registered manager post has been vacant since June 2021. The home has had three changes of managers since then, which has impacted on the quality of support that staff have received and has contributed to the delay in improvements being made. A whistle-blowing concern led to the departure of one manager in December 2021 and the day-to-day management of the home was undertaken by the responsible individual, who is an experienced children's home manager.

A new manager was appointed in March 2022 and has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Leaders have focused their attention on improving the quality of support provided to staff, improving team dynamics and ensuring that children are safeguarded and receive a good quality of care. Leaders have also managed to retain committed core staff, which has helped provide consistency for children.

Staff say that they have experienced much instability in leadership and management since the last inspection. However, they say that they have found the responsible

individual to be very supportive and always available for help and advice. This has helped to improve team dynamics and helped the team to cope with the effects of the change in management.

The lack of consistent management has impacted on the quality of children's records. For example, those records of missing episodes which have been duplicated or completed in error do not include a record of management oversight, and do not confirm that they are duplicate records. Direct work sessions do not include full information, and children's records do not consistently include detailed management oversight. Consequently, poor recording and management oversight compromise the monitoring and review systems of the home.

The frequency and quality of staff supervision have improved in recent months. However, supervision records are not always sufficiently detailed and not all sessions are consistently recorded. This compromises the oversight of staff practice and development.

Leaders and managers have failed to complete a quality of care review since the last full inspection. This is a breach of regulations. As such, this requirement is repeated. This compromises management oversight and the continuous improvement of the home.

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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. 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; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	29 June 2022

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
A person may only manage a children's home if— the person is of integrity and good character; having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children— the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children; and the person is physically and mentally fit to manage the home; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the person in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has— within the last 5 years, worked for at least 2 years in a position relevant to the residential care of children; worked for at least one year in a role requiring the supervision and management of staff working in a care role; and by the relevant date, attained— the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 5 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home; or in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017.	29 June 2022

The registered provider may defer the relevant date if the person— does not manage, or has not managed, a home for a prolonged period; or manages, or has managed, a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 28 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c) (2)(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii) (3)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. Case records must be kept— if the child dies before attaining the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of the child's death; in cases not falling within sub-paragraph (a), for 75 years from the child's date of birth; securely in the children's home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there; and in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, this refers to ensuring full and accurate records of: children's day-to-day experiences in the home; all actions taken in relation to complaints; missing/absent from care logs; management oversight of the home.	29 June 2022

In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— 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 plan. (Regulation 5 (c))	29 June 2022
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them; medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. Paragraph (2) does not apply to medicine which— is stored by the child for whom it is provided in such a way that other persons are prevented from using it; and may be safely self-administered by that child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3)(a)(b))	29 June 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are kept, and that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record. Specifically, this relates to ensuring that good records of the content of supervision are maintained for the purposes of staff development. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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: 2595340

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Champion Children (Fig Tree) Limited

Registered provider address: Champion Children (fig Tree) Limited, Moran House
Unit 7-8, 449-451 High Road, London NW10 2JJ

Responsible individual: Matthew Wakeling

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Jayshree Pillay, Social Care Inspector

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