

2597490

Registered provider: Aston Children's Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to four children with learning disabilities.

There is currently no registered manager. The previous manager left the organisation in April 2022. An interim manager is in day-to-day charge of the home.

Inspection date: 30 June 2022

This monitoring visit

Ofsted last visited the home to complete a full inspection on 17 and 18 May 2022. At the inspection, serious and widespread failures were found that meant children were not protected or their welfare promoted. The home was judged to be inadequate.

Due to the significant concerns found during the inspection, Ofsted issued 18 requirements and two compliance notices, under regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) and regulation 22 (contact and access to communications).

Ofsted also issued a restriction of accommodation; this meant that no other children could move into the home.

This monitoring visit took place to review the actions managers have taken to meet the enforcement actions and a number of requirements. During the visit, the inspector found that some improvements have been made and regulations 21, 23 and 25 have been met. Both compliance notices have been met. Managers have adhered to the restriction notice and no further children have been admitted to the home.

Managers have taken action to ensure that staff are provided with the skills to meet effectively the needs of the children that they care for. For example, all staff have now completed training in first aid, safeguarding children with disabilities and supporting children with learning disabilities. This means that staff develop the skills to care for and to safeguard the children in their care.

Managers have adapted the systems in place to ensure that the storage and recording of medication is robust. Staff are required to have medication competency assessments before any administration of medication. Clear filing systems are in place and daily medication checks take place. This means that medication will be stored and provided in line with the organisation's medication policy.

Leaders have taken steps to ensure that qualified and experienced adults care for the children. For example, all members of staff who have yet to attain their level 3 diploma for residential care, or an equivalent, have now been fully enrolled on the qualification. Consequently, staff will gain further knowledge to provide good-quality care.

Staff receive training in how to use children's preferred communication systems. For example, the child who lives at the home uses the picture exchange communication system (PECS). All staff have received training in PECS. This ensures that the child can communicate his views and wishes to other people effectively.

Furthermore, communication aids are positioned around the home so that the child can use them at will without having to ask the adults caring for him. The child is provided with prompts via PECS of upcoming activities or tasks and is able to raise concerns or complaints with the aids provided. Meaningful direct work now takes place as staff have the skills to communicate effectively with children.

The child can now freely access all areas of the home. Managers have removed the lock from the laundry room.

Managers have addressed recommendations from the fire risk assessment. They have adapted the fire exits, fitting thumb locks on the doors to ensure ease of escape. A fire safety officer from West Midlands Fire Service who visited the home has deemed that the home's fire safety procedures have improved and meet regulations.

Senior leaders have taken action to appoint a person in day-to-day charge of the home who has the necessary experience in children's residential care. This is helping to provide consistent leadership and support to the staff and the children who live in the home.

The interim manager has taken action to review the monitoring and review systems in the home. These systems provide managers with the tools to have better

oversight of the home and to review effectively the quality of care that children receive.

Following this monitoring visit, the notice to restrict accommodation has been lifted. The two compliance notices, under regulation 13 and regulation 22, have been met. Thirteen requirements have been restated, having not been reviewed during this monitoring visit.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
12/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; The conditions are— that the care meets the child's needs; that the care is delivered by a person who— has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care; and is under the supervision of a person who is appropriately skilled and qualified to supervise that care. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(i) (3)(b)(c)(i)(ii))	30 July 2022

The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iv))	30 July 2022
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; 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; 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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	30 July 2022
The health and well-being standard is that— children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1)(c))	30 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—	30 July 2022

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi))	
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 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))	30 July 2022
The registered person must compile in relation to the children’s home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1))	30 July 2022
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	30 July 2022

The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home— if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))	30 July 2022
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b) (4)(b))	30 July 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(c))	30 July 2022
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	30 July 2022

The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).

30 July 2022

When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2597490

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aston Children's Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 181 Penn Road, Wolverhampton WV3 0EQ

Responsible individual: Mahesh Mehan

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kev Brammer, Social Care Inspector

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