

2599183

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that children living in this home may experience a range of social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021. She is suitably experienced and qualified.

Inspection date: 11 January 2023

Date of last inspection: 6 April 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Staff and children have positive relationships with one another. Children feel listened to and say that they can talk about their feelings with staff. One child and their social worker said that although there has been lots of changes to the staff team, the child now has better relationships with the current staff team.

Children have up-to-date care plans and pathway plans on file from their placing authorities, which means that the staff team is clear about the objectives of children's placements and the support they require. Additionally, staff understand children's academic levels and targets at school, their barriers to learning and the support they require to achieve in school.

Children's individual health plans identify their current needs and how they are supported to sustain good health. Staff encourage children to access external health professionals, such as therapists and child and adolescent mental health services, to support their emotional well-being.

Key-work sessions with children are of good quality. They are purposeful and demonstrate that staff use their positive relationships with children to engage them in regular conversations and direct work. The sessions focus specifically on children's needs and are used to support them when they are struggling with their emotions.

The home is well decorated in most communal areas. However, the hallway and doors require painting. The hallway carpet also needs replacing. The manager has obtained quotes for this work to take place in the coming weeks. This should be a priority, as these areas are not maintained to the same standard as the rest of the home.

Three children have moved out of the home since the last inspection. Two of these moves were planned and positive moves in line with the children's wishes and needs. Staff stay in contact with most children to see how they are progressing. One child unexpectedly moved out of the home. While this was not a positive experience for the child, the staff team could no longer keep the child safe, and his behaviour was impacting on other children living in the home.

The safety of children

The home's matching process is not effective. The manager does not consider whether children can live safely together. In addition, when there are specific shared risks for children, there are no clear control measures or strategies identified to

reduce the risks. One child's placement had not been sufficiently risk assessed in terms of considering whether the staff team had the skills, training and experience to meet the child's needs or to assess the impact of the move on other children already living in the home. Consequently, the child's placement came to an end after a short period living in the home.

There is a high number of incidents of children going missing from the home. Some children have encouraged others to go missing with them. That said, staff respond immediately when children go missing from home and are proactive in trying to locate them quickly. Staff reflection sessions and children debriefs are used to identify triggers to children going missing and any action that can be taken to reduce this.

Serious incidents are dealt with appropriately by the staff team. The use of the police is proportionate to protect children and staff from harm. Behaviour support plans reflect children's views about how staff can support them when they are struggling to manage their behaviour. The manager has good links with key safeguarding professionals who work with children to educate them about their risk-taking behaviour.

Allegations are taken seriously and shared with the relevant safeguarding professionals, such as the placing authority and designated officer, without delay. However, on one occasion, the manager has failed to notify Ofsted of an allegation made by a child. Safe allegation management procedures have been revisited in a team meeting, through additional training and during staff supervision sessions. Consequently, staff have an improved understanding of the procedures they should follow the event of an allegation.

The quality of records of consequences has improved. The manager has oversight of all consequences. She speaks to the child to try to find alternative ways to manage their behaviour and the support that staff could provide, to avoid further consequences being given.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager has positive relationships with the children and knows them well. She advocates on their behalf to help them achieve positive outcomes. Social workers say that the manager is a positive figure in the home. She ensures that there is regular communication between the staff team and the children's social workers.

The manager is organised and has met most of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. There are now clear arrangements in place in relation to the oversight of the home when the manager is on leave.

There has been a high turnover of staff, and new staff have been introduced to the home. However, the manager now has a full and permanent staff team. Staff report that team stability and morale have improved. All staff now receive regular practice-

related supervision, which means that staff are provided with appropriate support and guidance to help them develop their skills in their roles.

Safer recruitment has improved. The manager is now accountable for ensuring that all staff have had the relevant suitability checks prior to working in the home. In addition to this, the responsible individual makes the final decision in relation to staff suitability to work in the home with the children.

A new independent visitor has been employed by the company. The visitor obtains regular feedback from key people about the quality of care provided to children, and they make appropriate recommendations to improve the operation of the home. However, the manager's review of the quality of care report does not include feedback about children's experiences of living in the home or a clear evaluation of the impact of the service on children's progress. This was a requirement at the last inspection and has therefore been restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/01/2022	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 care planning standard is that children— 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, asset out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(b) (2)(a))	23 February 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	23 February 2023
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. 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) (5))	23 February 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. In most cases, children's homes should be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2599183

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: 40 to 42 Kemble Street, Prescott L34 5SQ

Responsible individual: Caron Lackenby

Registered manager: Nia Roscoe

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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