

2599183

Omega Care Group Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for up to three children who may experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home and the manager have been registered with Ofsted since August 2020.

Inspection date: 28 January 2021

This monitoring visit

The visit took place due to escalating concerns about children's safety arising from safeguarding notifications received by Ofsted. The visit included a combination of on-site and off-site activities. This is the first visit the home has received since it registered on 25 August 2020.

The current standards of care and support provided at this home mean that the children's safety, health and emotional well-being needs are not being adequately met. The lack of coordinated placement planning to support the children effectively at a critical period in their lives is placing them at significant risk and potentially compromising their future life chances.

A child was admitted to the home who cannot be cared for safely. Pre-admission planning did not adequately consider the risks associated with the home's location in relation to the child's specific needs. The staff do not have sufficient specialist training or clear strategies in place to ensure the child's safety. The impact on the other child living at the home was not fully considered. As a result, the initial positive progress the child was making has faltered.

Risk management plans do not provide the staff with detailed strategies and guidance to keep children safe. This means they fail to intervene proactively to protect children. For example, staff did not immediately challenge unknown adult males meeting a child, who is at risk of exploitation, outside the home. A deprivation of liberty safeguards order was made to prevent the child from having access to

social media and a mobile telephone. Before surrendering the telephone, the staff allowed the child to write a list of telephone numbers stored on it, without knowing whether the numbers belonged to individuals who might pose a risk to the child's safety.

A child has gone missing from the home on four occasions, despite being cared for on a 2:1 basis both in the home and when out in the community. Reports do not record if any further action is taken to reduce the risk of the child returning to addresses where she has been found. However, the police missing-from-home coordinator and the child's social worker note that staff do share information promptly to support efforts to locate the child as quickly as possible.

The staff team has increasingly required the assistance of police to manage children's behaviour. This increases the risk of the children being criminalised. On one occasion, a child was held overnight in police custody, with no challenge to the appropriateness of this action. The registered manager confirmed that the child could have returned to the home to be cared for safely by the staff.

Records of physical interventions do not meet the regulation. There is no record of whether children are spoken to after the use of restraint, apart from being offered medical attention and a complaints form. There is little information about staff debriefs, and management oversight does not consider whether changes in staff practice could help to prevent further incidents occurring.

Care planning is not reviewed regularly to ensure that children are receiving the support they need. Plans fail to identify support needs and progress outcomes are not recorded. This hinders children's progress and leads to poor experiences and outcomes.

Children in the home are cared for on a 2:1 basis. The rota provided does not reflect this. It was clear from an incident report that staff who were involved are not recorded on the rota supplied. The member of agency staff employed as a waking night worker is not included on the rota. Furthermore, on a number of occasions, the registered manager is included among the staff supporting the children. This impacts on her ability to fulfil her management duties. There have been changes in the staff team since the home opened. Staff from another of the provider's homes are currently supporting this home. This means that children are not receiving care and support from a consistent team.

Safeguarding notifications sent to the regulator do not include full information to allow inspectors to assess whether the home is taking appropriate action to keep children safe.

Monitoring systems within the home are not effective. The registered manager failed to identify, until recently, that some of the staff are not receiving practice-related supervision in line with the provider's policies and procedures. Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that staff understand and embed the home's model

of care in their practice. This means that when the children have entered a period of crisis, they have not received consistent boundaries or care from the staff team.

The review of the home's location has not been updated to include how risks, such as access to nearby motorways, train stations and bridges, are to be managed with respect to children's specific needs and vulnerabilities. Observations made by staff about potential risks in the local area, such as places where children and young people congregate, or indicators of drugs misuse, are not included in the report.

The lack of rigour by the registered manager has not helped the home to sufficiently protect children and maintain good enough standards of care. This has led to children's safety and well-being not being promoted at all times.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not previously inspected		

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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(b)(c)) Specifically, children's risks and vulnerabilities need to be thoroughly assessed and understood. Plans should be reviewed and updated as necessary to provide staff with clear guidance on how to mitigate and respond to risk. Staff should understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from harm and be proactive in keeping children safe. The home's location should be reviewed to	19 February 2021

ensure that it is safe for children to live there, taking into account their presenting risks and needs.	
*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— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) The registered person should ensure that the staff are trained to meet the specific needs of children and work together consistently to deliver good-quality care. Rotas should include accurate details of staff working in the home and demonstrate that there are sufficient staff to meet placing authorities' expectations of staffing ratios, in line with children's plans. Effective monitoring and review systems should be embedded in the home so that children's progress is tracked and practice within the home is monitored to drive forward improvements in the quality of care.	19 February 2021
*The care planning standard is that children—	19 February 2021

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; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)) Specifically, the provider should ensure that children are admitted to the home based on a thorough assessment of their needs and the ability of staff to meet those needs effectively. The assessment should consider the impact of the location of the home on the new child and any impact on children already living in the home in respect of their safety and well-being. Children's plans should provide staff with clear guidance to meet their needs. Plans should be regularly reviewed and updated to include any emerging needs and record progress and outcomes.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; 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; and	5 March 2021

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; 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)(a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person should evaluate the effectiveness of the measure to consider any changes in staff practice that reduce the risk of further use of the measures. The registered person or authorised person should ensure that records include confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure, in addition to offering medical attention and offering complaints forms.	
A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter. (Regulation 40 (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) Specifically, notifications should include details of additional relevant information and action taken to ensure children's safety.	5 March 2021
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). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) In particular, the review should include details regarding how risks will be managed with reference to children's specific needs, and take into account relevant knowledge about the local area.	5 March 2021
The registered person must ensure that all employees—	5 March 2021

receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This refers specifically to staff receiving reflective supervision regularly, in line with policy and procedures.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2599183

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: Castle Chambers, 43 Castle Street, Liverpool L2 9TL

Responsible individual: Alekos Aresti

Registered manager: Sandra Probert

Inspector

Karen Willson, Social Care Inspector

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