

2599994

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a solo-bedded home. It is owned and run by a local authority. It provides medium- to long-term care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It was registered in July 2020. The registered manager is on long-term secondment at another home and there is an interim manager in post.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2021.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Staff provide highly individualised care to the child in placement. This includes the child being involved in the decision-making around which staff care for her. The child has good relationships with the team around her, and this leads to a warm and relaxed feeling within the home. The child has progressed from her starting point, including increasing her self-esteem and confidence. This has also led to a reduction in the number of times she goes missing from the home.

Staff consult regularly with the child on a wide variety of topics, which makes her feel listened to and promotes feelings of self-worth. These topics include how often she wants to see family, what activities she enjoys and how her bedroom is decorated. The child is creative and asked to decorate her room in a patchwork of colours. Staff helped her to do this, resulting in a space that is unique to her, reflects her personality and increases her sense of belonging.

Staff have been unable to help the child maintain her education placement. The child's education consists of a tutor coming to the home for a few hours per week. This does not provide enough education time for the child to study the full curriculum. This could affect her academic achievements in the longer term. Additionally, not attending school results in her being increasingly isolated from her peers. Staff are working with education professionals to try to remove some of the barriers to her going to school. A reduced timetable is in place to make the child's move back to school easier.

The child's movements in the community are restricted due to the legal order relating to her placement. Staff try to ensure that this does not limit her life experiences beyond what is necessary. Staff advocate on the child's behalf in this regard. They will challenge others if they feel restrictions are too onerous or not in the child's best interests. However, there have been a small number of incidents when the staff have not abided by the framework laid out in this order and not prevented the child from leaving the home on her own. This has led to the child going missing, thereby placing her at risk.

Staff receive advice from a psychologist on how best to support the child's emotional well-being. However, the advice is not shared with the whole staff team consistently and their knowledge of it is only partial. This means that care is not always consistent, nor does it fully respond to the child's emotional needs. This results in missed opportunities to help the child in understanding and managing her feelings.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The times when the child has gone missing, she could potentially have been exposed to, or subject to, harm. Staff have not always recognised changes in the child's behaviour that may have indicated her plans to abscond. When the child has been missing, staff have followed plans to return her quickly and safely with help from the police. The manager's records for tracking the occasions the child is missing from home are not up to date. This recording shortfall does not support the manager and staff in ensuring all relevant checks and interviews happen. This further limits their ability to understand why the child has gone missing and prevent it from happening again.

Other risks to the child and worries the staff have about behaviour are understood and are well documented. The number of serious incidents arising from these behaviours have reduced. Staff follow the plans to keep the child safe, and regularly review these to make sure they are up to date and effective.

Staff work well with all professionals involved with the child and update them regularly. This helps all agencies to work together to promote the child's safety and well-being.

At the previous visit, it was identified that the provider was not notifying Ofsted in the event of a serious incident. This continues, as an allegation against a staff member has not been notified. In failing to notify the regulator there was no external oversight, which does not promote the child's welfare. The manager had in all other respects followed the home's policy and, on this occasion, there was no negative impact on the child.

The provider does not consistently ensure that the premises meet the required standard. Fire-alarm checks and checks of other fire-safety equipment do not take place as frequently as they should. On arrival for the inspection, there was no electricity due to staff oversight in purchasing a top-up. Although this was short in duration and remedied quickly while the inspector was on site, it does not meet an acceptable level of care.

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

The registered manager has been working at another children's home over the last few months. Her absence has been covered by several interim managers, all of whom have had a relatively short period in the post. The current interim manager has been in post for just under six months. This has led to a lack of consistency and stability in the home for both the staff and the child.

Team meetings have not been held frequently, which means that the manager has limited opportunity to gauge whether staff have a consistent understanding of the child's care needs and to share management information. It also reduces the

opportunity for staff to discuss the child as a team and reflect on their practice. Supervision is not taking place regularly, which further reduces the opportunity for staff to discuss practice issues or ensure that the child's needs are met. Staff say that they sometimes feel undermined by the actions of their colleagues who set different boundaries for the child. This does not provide clear and consistent parenting for the child. Additionally, these shortfalls result in a fractured team who do not have a cohesive vision of some aspects of the child's care.

Managers do not ensure that training is managed in a cohesive way. Gaps in staff training relating to exploitation and self-harm means that staff are not fully aware of how to address these serious issues. This further enhances the potential risk of harm to children.

The current interim manager has a strong relationship with the child, which promotes the likelihood of the child engaging in her care. There has also been an improvement in communication with professionals and the child's family, and this is in the child's best interest.

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, the 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— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and 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; and 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)(a)(iii)(b)(d)) This refers to staff recognising the significance of a child's change in behaviour in relation to increasing risk, delivering care in line with the court order, and ensuring fire checks are done in line with the home's policy. The registered person should also have a system to ensure that there is no preventable disruption to power supply.	17 October 2021
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;	31 October 2021

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(e)(h)) This refers to disseminating information from other professionals, including the home's psychologist, and multi-agency meetings to staff and checking their understanding and application of this. It also refers to holding regular well-documented team meetings and individual supervision sessions in line with the provider's policy. The registered person should ensure that all staff complete training in self-harm and exploitation. The registered person should establish and/or maintain systems for monitoring missing episodes, significant incidents, supervision and training of staff.	
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; or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))	30 September 2021

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: 2599994

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kingston upon Hull City Council

Registered provider address: The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull HU1 2AA

Responsible individual: Michele Colthup

Registered manager: Charlene Martin

Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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