

2611667

Registered provider: Above and Beyond Residential Care limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It is registered for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered in December 2020. There is no registered manager.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 21 October 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 December 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the last inspection, the home was issued with a notice to suspend its registration, which took place with immediate effect. Three compliance notices were issued to the provider. These notices were in relation to breaches of regulation 12, the protection of children, regulation 13, leadership and management, and regulation 14, care planning.

On 14 September 2021, a monitoring visit was conducted to review the actions taken to meet the steps in the three compliance notices issued under regulation 12, regulation 13, and regulation 14. The provider had taken sufficient action to meet two of the compliance notices. However, a further compliance notice under regulation 14 was issued. The notice of suspension remained in place.

On 21 October 2021, a further monitoring visit was conducted to review the actions taken to meet the steps of the compliance notice issued under regulation 14, care planning. The provider had taken sufficient action to meet the compliance notice. Following this monitoring visit, the notice of suspension was removed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The home has recently reopened after a period of suspension. At the time of the inspection, one child lived at the home. The child had been living at the home for 30 days. The home is failing to provide effective care and support for the child currently living in the home.

There are serious shortfalls in safeguarding practice, care planning, the management of risks to children's safety, and the leadership and management of the home. These weaknesses have a significant impact on children's safety, welfare, experiences and progress.

Maintaining consistent and positive relationships with staff has been difficult for the child. Consequently, the child has not fully invested in their home or made progress. The child's views are not routinely gathered to ensure that their wishes and views are understood.

When the child moved in to the home, they were not in education or training. Staff have been proactive in identifying an educational course for the child. However, the child did not have a current education plan and staff did not have sight of any previous plans. This means that staff did not have a full understanding of the child's educational progress or any individual needs.

The child is registered with local primary care services. However, staff do not have all relevant information about the child's health. Staff have actively challenged the placing authority and requested further information.

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

Safeguarding practice in the home is poor and does not promote the safety and welfare of the child. Leaders, managers and staff do not have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that the child is safeguarded effectively, and failed to report safeguarding concerns with a child's placing local authority in a timely manner. This led to a delay in appropriate action being taken to ensure that the safety and welfare of the child were promoted.

Allegations of abuse are not managed in line with safeguarding procedures. When a child reported that she had been assaulted by a staff member, the manager and staff failed to recognise this as a significant incident and did not report and record the incident in line with safeguarding and organisational procedures. Furthermore, the manager made the decision to leave the child in the sole care of the same staff member overnight.

Leaders and managers do not always share accurate information with external professionals. Safeguarding notifications do not match with information recorded in the home. Allegations shared with the designated officer were inaccurate and were missing information. Therefore, professionals make decisions without being aware of important detail. As a result, some of these decisions may not always be in the child's best interests.

When a child failed to return home, staff reported the child as missing from care. Records provide contradictory information about the length of time that the child was missing from the home. The procedures in the home inform staff about the expectation for them to actively look for children and inform the manager. Records show that over the two days that the child was missing, staff looked in the local area for less than 10 minutes. Staff did not inform managers and leaders that the child was missing until she had been away from the home for over 24 hours. This does not demonstrate safe or caring practice.

Care planning documents and risk assessments do not include all the known information about the child, and documentation is not kept up to date as new events occur. Assessments do not clearly identify or include the action staff should take to minimise and reduce risks. Furthermore, information provided by placing authorities is not included or considered in pre-placement planning. The lack of clear risk identification and planning to address concerns fails to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is no registered manager at the home. The previous registered manager resigned in August 2021. An interim manager was recruited in September 2021. However, an application has not yet been received by Ofsted.

There are failings in the management oversight and monitoring of the home to identify areas of weakness and to take effective action to resolve these. For example, the management oversight and challenge of records is limited, with some serious incidents, including the use of physical intervention, not having sufficient management oversight. As a result, shortfalls in staff practice and recording have continued and remain unchallenged.

Inspectors were informed that staff morale has improved and the manager was very supportive. The manager and deputy manager work closely together and have worked extensive hours covering shifts when the home has been short staffed. Staff are receiving supervision of their practice regularly. However, records of this were very brief and there was no evidence that supervision is reflective or developmental. This is limiting opportunities for staff to reflect critically on their practice and development needs, and for managers to assess staff performance and continued suitability.

Despite staff receiving training in safeguarding and enhanced safeguarding, practice in this area is poor and learning from training has not been implemented. This means that the safety of children in their care is compromised.

There is no external monitoring from an independent person. The last time the appointed independent person visited the home was six months prior to the inspection. There had been no escalation from leaders and managers to address this.

Monitoring of the quality of care in the home is not sufficiently robust. Leaders and managers have not yet implemented an effective monitoring system, which means that their ability to identify shortfalls in practice and improvements is limited.

Ofsted is of the view that that leaders and staff are unable to reduce risks to children and an emergency restriction notice was issued on the provider. Four compliance notices have been served under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, regulation 13, the leadership and management standard, regulation 14, the care planning standard and regulation 40, notification of a serious event. These notices will be monitored.

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, 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. Staff must help each child to understand how to keep safe and have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. The registered person must take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; 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. The registered person must ensure that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	19 January 2022
* 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.	19 January 2022

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; 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; 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)(c)(d)(f)(h)) This relates to the manager’s weak oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the quality of care and protection provided in the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	
* 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) This relates to impact assessments and some children’s negative experience of moving on from the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	19 January 2022
The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. The registered person must ensure that all employees	19 January 2022

receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a) (4)(b))	
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 name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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 has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and 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)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	19 January 2022

*The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; or there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(c)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that there is no delay in notifying safeguarding agencies. The information must be factually correct. This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and is repeated.	19 January 2022
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit (“the independent person’s report”) which sets out, in particular, the independent person’s opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children’s well-being. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the independent person must consult with stakeholders, including children living in the home. There should be a clear opinion in the report about the safeguarding of children and whether their well-being is promoted.	19 January 2022
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	19 January 2022

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

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.

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 (2)(a)(b)(c) (4)(a) (5))

In particular, the review must focus on the quality of care provided and include the views of stakeholders. The report should be sent to Ofsted in a timely manner.

This is a repeat requirement.

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 2611667

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Above and Beyond Residential Care limited

Registered provider address: Suite 14 Foundry House, Waterside Lane, Widnes
WA8 8GT

Responsible individual: Paul Clarke

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Jessica Higginson, Social Care Inspector

Nick Veysey, Social Care Inspector

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