

2625941

Registered provider: Active Young People Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to nine children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023. Seven children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection date: 28 November 2023

Date of last inspection: 28 June 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors 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'.

Outcome from the inspection

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care and protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- There is no effective system for overseeing injuries to children.
- There is no action plan to ensure the correct support is in place for a member of staff after an investigation into their practice.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that a staff member has an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate while working with children.
- Leaders and managers do not have sufficient oversight of the children's care.
- Leadership of the home has not ensured that all staff complete mandatory training, such as first aid.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff are enrolled and supported to achieve a relevant qualification within the necessary timescales.
- Not all children receive care in a clean, safe and comfortable home.

Findings from the inspection

The registered manager does not have an effective monitoring system in place in the event children suffer any form of injury. Body-maps completed by staff do not provide sufficient information, and these records are not reviewed by the registered manager in a timely way. This leaves time for injuries to lessen or heal completely. This means that any injuries to children are not responded to appropriately, and there is not enough information to assess whether the injury was accidental or not. This leaves children at risk.

When allegations against staff are investigated, leaders and managers do not ensure there is a clear plan in place to oversee, monitor and support staff when they return to work. This does not provide children with assurances that their safety and well-being are a priority.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff have the necessary safeguarding checks in place to ensure they are safe to work with children. One member of staff's overseas police check had expired. Although the manager was aware of this, no safeguards were put in place while a DBS certificate was applied for. This does not ensure that children are cared for by adults who are safe to do so.

A closed culture assessment completed by the provider identified concerns about children being cared for in isolation and staff often working on their own with children. Children do not have free access to all areas in the home as they live in apartments that staff move between with key fob access. This means that children

are sometimes isolated from their peers, which inhibits their social development. In addition, the location of the registered manager's office prevents visible oversight of staff practice and the care of the children. The provider has not taken action to mitigate the perceived vulnerabilities identified in their closed culture assessment.

Not enough staff have the relevant qualifications as set out in the regulations and associated guidance. Some staff have not completed the diploma qualification by the relevant date, and others are awaiting to be enrolled on the diploma. Not all staff are enrolled to complete mandatory training as set out in the statement of purpose.

The children's environment was unclean and in need of repairs. Some walls had smear marks and required cleaning; the garden had rubbish that needed to be removed. There are other areas of the home that require attention to make them safe. These issues were raised at the full inspection in June 2023, and this requirement is therefore being restated.

Not all children's plans and risk assessments are up to date. One child's plan provides details of medication that the registered manager said had not been prescribed since the child lived at the home. The registered manager has systems in place to monitor children's plans and risk assessments. However, these systems are ineffective in ensuring children's records are correct or that staff have clear and accurate plans to follow.

One child has a camera in their room that is used at night to monitor their sleep pattern. The home does not have a policy in place for monitoring children in this way. Although staff consider this measure is no longer necessary to monitor the child's sleep, there has been no review of the arrangements or challenge to the placing authority about the necessity for this. This does not ensure that children's privacy is protected.

Staff supervision does not provide an opportunity for reflective practice or to discuss any safeguarding concerns in relation to the children. Leaders and managers have started to make changes to this process but the quality of this remains a concern. This requirement has been restated.

Children's records of their daily experiences of living in the home are well documented. Records of children spending time enjoying activities in the community are held on children's files and include photographs of their experiences. Children are engaged in activities, and this is reflected in their records to help children understand their experiences in their time living in the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/02/2022	Full	Inadequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
* 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— 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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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)(f)(h))	21 January 2024
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each	21 January 2024

child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))	
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; protect and promote each child's welfare; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home; and The conditions are— that the care is delivered by a person who— has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care; and	21 January 2024

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)(vi)(vii)(ix)(c)(i)(ii) (3)(c)(i)(ii)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
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; 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; 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)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(d))	21 January 2024
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child’s need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1) (a)(d))	21 January 2024
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and	21 January 2024

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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home;	21 January 2024

The registered person may permit an individual to start work at the home despite the fact that the requirement in paragraph (3)(d) has not been met if— the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about each of the matters in Schedule 2 in respect of the individual, but the enquiries in relation to any of the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete; the registered person ensures that the individual is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties, pending receipt of any outstanding information on the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2, which is then considered satisfactory by the registered person. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(b)(d) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a) (7) (a)(b)(d))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	21 January 2024
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date (Regulation 36 (1)(b)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	21 January 2024

*This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that training undertaken by staff is clearly recorded and that refresher training is undertaken within timescale. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53 paragraph 10.8)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2625941

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Active Young People Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Suffolk Way, Sevenoaks TN13 1YL

Responsible individual: Gemma Wilkinson

Registered manager: Stevie Daley

Inspectors

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

Lisa Gordon, Social Care Inspector

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