

# 2629398

Registered provider: Anchor Care and Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for one child with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home registered in February 2021. This is the home's first inspection.

One child has lived at the home since it opened but has recently moved out. No children were living at the home during the inspection.

**Inspection dates: 30 June to 1 July 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. The care and experiences of children are poor, and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** Not applicable

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

The registered provider has admitted a child with significant complex behaviour to a newly registered home with a newly formed staff team. Staff have not been able to manage the challenges that the child presented. Consequently, the child moved out of the home. This placement breakdown has continued a pattern of potentially damaging placement endings for the child.

The therapeutic and mental health services that should have been provided as part of the package of care for the child were significantly delayed. The child did not receive these services during his placement.

The child's established behaviours, which the staff should have prepared for prior to his admission to the home, such as going missing in the early hours of the morning, substance misuse and damage to property, significantly increased during the placement.

Care planning is weak. For example, plans did not detail information about the child's erratic sleep pattern or a recommended sleep hygiene routine. This means that staff did not have comprehensive information about how to care for the child.

The child did not have a school placement during his time at the home. This means that he did not benefit from on-line teaching during the period of lockdown or from face-to-face teaching when schools re-opened. Although staff made some efforts to help find a local school, the registered manager was not assertive enough in challenging education agencies about the delay in finding a school placement and then attending the school.

Staff have tried to form nurturing relationships with the child and made some progress in this regard. He enjoyed some activities such as cycling and walking. He also enjoyed playing on his play station, although he spent much of his time on his own in his bedroom as time went on.

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

On two occasions, staff did not fully implement the child's safety plan. This states that staff should report the child as missing to the police as soon as they lose sight of him. This meant that vital time was lost that could have been used by the police to look for him.

Staff do not have a good understanding of the needs of children who self-harm. Staff do not identify hazards in the home environment, elevating risks to children with a history of self-harm. For example, on one occasion, the child broke several

windowpanes. These were not boarded up and, therefore, the child had access to the broken glass.

Risk management plans are weak. Risks associated with the child are not fully considered and addressed. For example, risk management plans do not detail risks of exploitation. The child has been able to get out of the car to go missing on four occasions. Preventative strategies, such as child locks, have not been explored.

Risks associated with the location of the home were not appropriately considered against the child's history and known behaviours. When developing the home's location risk assessment, relevant external professionals such as the police and local authority were not consulted.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The decision to admit the child to the home was not properly considered by managers. The child's needs were not assessed against the skills and competency of the newly formed staff team. Consequently, staff struggled to manage the challenges the child presented, and he was given notice to leave. After another serious incident, the home served immediate notice, meaning that the child left the home quickly, with no preparation for his next placement. These management decisions had a potentially damaging effect on the child.

The registered manager has not delivered services as set out in the home's statement of purpose. The qualified therapist that should have provided direct therapy to children was not available. This meant that the child did not receive the support that he required.

Maintenance systems are poor. Hazards have been left around the house. For example, bricks have been left in the garden after a wall was knocked down. A bedroom door lock, an office door and a shower were left broken for too long. This meant that the home is not a nurturing environment and is potentially unsafe.

Monitoring systems are not robust. For example, senior staff did not notice that the child's missing-from-home safety plan had not been properly adhered to.

Staff are supported by a counsellor who visits the home weekly. She specifically talks to staff about how they are feeling and whether she can suggest any strategies to help with the behaviour of children. This has helped the newly formed staff team to reflect on their practice.

## 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   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;</p> <p>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 child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(b)(c))</p> <p>This relates to the agreed package of therapy that did not take place, and the challenge of obtaining external professionals to provide services that a child required, such as education. This also relates to the omission of a referral to a drug and alcohol worker, as requested within a strategy discussion.</p> | 13/08/2021 |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(vii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                | 13/08/2021 |

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| <p>This relates to staff not recognising risk around a child's self-harm behaviour; poor risk management plans and staff not following the child's safety plan when he went missing.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p> <p>This relates to damage that has not been made safe. This presents a risk to the child.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>13/08/2021</p> |
| <p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.<br/>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h))</p> <p>This relates to the offer of specialist therapeutic input that was not available; the admission of a child with highly complex needs into a home with a newly formed staff team who did not have the necessary training to meet the child's needs and the inaccurate monitoring of missing-from-care records.</p> | <p>13/08/2021</p> |

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| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed.<br/>(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>This relates to weak care planning and a safety plan that was not followed.</p> | <p>13/08/2021</p> |
| <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (2))</p> <p>This relates to that there is no reference to consultation with the local authority, police and other relevant persons about the location of the home and risks within the local community in the location risk assessment. This document has not been used to match a child to the home during the admission process.</p>          | <p>13/08/2021</p> |

\* 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:** 2629398

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Anchor Care and Education Limited

**Registered provider address:** Saxon House, Moseley's Farm Business Centre, Fornham All Saints, Bury St. Edmunds IP28 6JY

**Responsible individual:** John Bolton

**Registered manager:** Philip Pendleton

## Inspector(s)

Joanne Vyas, Social Care Inspector

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