

2641767

Registered provider: Real Care Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there was one child living in the home.

The manager in post has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

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: 26 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 26 April 2022. At the time of the visit, the home's registration had been suspended and there were no children living in the home. Following this visit, a further notice suspending the registration of the home was issued with immediate effect from 27 April 2022.

A monitoring visit was carried out on 7 June 2022 to monitor the suspension notice. Following the visit, a case review was held. It was the decision of the case review that the suspension notice should remain in place.

A further monitoring visit was carried out on 14 July 2022. Following this visit, the suspension of the home's registration was ended.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2022	Full	Inadequate
01/02/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

There are significant shortfalls in relation to care planning, the assessment and management of risks, and the leadership and management of the home. These weaknesses result in the child not receiving well-planned care that promotes their safety and welfare.

Leaders and managers did not undertake a thorough assessment of the child's needs prior to them moving in to the home. Managers and staff do not know or understand the child's needs. Therefore, the child is not receiving good-quality care that addresses all of their needs.

Furthermore, managers have failed to ensure that they have the relevant plans from the local authority. In the absence of individualised plans for the child's care, their needs are not being met.

The child is encouraged to make choices and express their views about the activities that they would like to do and the food that they would like to eat. However, when the child raised a concern, they were not listened to. The child has also written a letter to the manager, but they have not received a response. Failing to take timely action when children raise concerns does not demonstrate that children are listened to and does not support the development of positive and trusting relationships.

Staff understand the importance of the child spending time with people who are important to them. Although managers and staff promote positive time with family and friends at the home, the child told inspectors that moving far away from family and friends has been difficult. The child does not know the plan for them to maintain links with family and friends in their hometown.

The child lives in a home that is well maintained and furnished, and decorated to a high standard. However, there were concerns with cleanliness in the home's bathrooms. Failing to maintain and promote acceptable standards of hygiene in these areas detracts from the homeliness and does not evidence that managers and staff place value on the child's home environment.

The child has been enrolled in a new school. The child is encouraged to attend regularly and staff praise their attendance and attainment at school. The child told inspectors that they have made friends in their new school.

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

Safeguarding practice in the home is inadequate. Managers and staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping the child safe.

Staff do not understand the child's risks and vulnerabilities. They have not received training in matters that are relevant to the needs of the child who lives in the home. Therefore, staff do not have sufficient knowledge to safeguard the child.

Risk management plans are ineffective as they do not contain sufficient information about the child's known risks. Some identified risks, such as those around the internet and mobile phone use, are not assessed. The plans do not contain detailed steps or strategies that staff should take to manage and reduce risks. Failing to take appropriate action to respond to and minimise risks leaves the child at risk of harm.

There is a lack of support for the child around their self-injurious behaviours. Although there is a risk assessment in place, it is generic and was not updated following an incident of self-injurious behaviour. Failing to respond effectively to incidents of self-injurious behaviours does not safeguard the child.

When staff record a cause for concern, there is a poor reflection on the matters that they raise. Staff do not receive appropriate guidance about how to manage potentially unsafe behaviours and keep the child safe. Leaders and managers have minimised concerns around the child's behaviour. Lack of insight into these matters together with poor guidance from leaders and managers does not promote the safety and welfare of the child.

Staff undertake direct work with the child to try and develop their understanding of how to keep safe. However, this work is not evaluated by staff or managers. The child is not encouraged to reflect on the topics that are discussed, therefore, staff and managers are failing to determine the effectiveness of this work as a tool to keep the child safe.

Further to this, managers do not have effective oversight of the support that the child is receiving. There have been occasions where staff practice has been ineffective and inappropriate. Poor staff practice and ineffective oversight from leaders and managers place the child at risk of harm.

Staff do not demonstrate an understanding of the risks that the internet may pose to the child. Staff were not clear about the child's specific vulnerabilities or the actions that they should take to keep them safe.

Incidents of potential bullying have not been responded to appropriately. The child has not been helped to understand the impact of bullying behaviour on others.

The child has regular therapeutic intervention from an employed assistant psychologist. Poor risk management and ineffective care planning has limited the impact of this intervention. Managers cannot evidence how staff practice is improving as a result of the therapeutic model that is implemented in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager has submitted an application to register with Ofsted. The manager has previous experience as a registered manager, although they have recently had a career break.

Due to their career break, the responsible individual had identified further learning and development for the manager. Despite a lengthy induction period, the responsible individual has not completed all of the development plan activities. This was a missed opportunity to support the manager and ensure that they have the necessary skills to enable them to fulfil their role.

Management oversight of significant events is poor and has resulted in an insufficient review of incidents and reflection on whether staff practice has been effective. As a result, incidents of self-harm and concerns around child exploitation have not had an appropriate response to reduce risks.

Staff spoken to said that they felt well supported by managers, who they say are approachable. Some staff said that the team work well together. However, there have been complaints from within the team about standards of professional practice. Managers have investigated these concerns but there is little reflection on how unprofessional practice and problematic relationships between staff can have an adverse effect on the child who lives in the home.

Managers have not ensured that staff have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the child who lives in the home. Although staff have been provided with training, they have not implemented this learning into practice. Managers have poor oversight of training records. Some staff, including the manager, have completed multiple online training courses in one day. This does not demonstrate that there is appropriate reflection on the training that they receive so that this informs and improves their practice.

Leaders and the manager are not providing staff with practice-based supervision. This does not support the development of good practice and, therefore, the quality of care provided to the child is not improving.

Due to the safeguarding concerns, Ofsted is of the view that if further children move in to the home this would compromise the safety of the child already living in the home as well as any new children moving in. Based on the information outlined above, Ofsted issued a notice of restriction of accommodation at the home.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; 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 (a)(c))	27 November 2022
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful;	27 November 2022

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff understand the impact that harmful and exploitative relationships can have on the child and help the child to recognise and withdraw from these relationships.	
*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;	27 November 2022

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	
*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 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	27 November 2022
*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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	27 November 2022

that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that a detailed assessment is made prior to children moving in to the home. This assessment must consider whether staff have the skills to meet the child's needs as well as determining if the environment or location of the home could have a negative effect on the child's identified risks and vulnerabilities. Further to this, the registered person must ensure that they have the relevant local authority care plan for the child and that staff know and understand what the child's individual needs are and how to address them.	
This regulation applies to a child who is looked after by a local authority. The registered person must cooperate with the child's placing authority in agreeing and signing the child's placement plan. (Regulation 17 (1) (2))	27 November 2022
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 an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that they explore the reasons why staff left previous employment. Further to this, they must ensure that when employment dates for staff cannot be verified by previous employers, they	27 November 2022

seek to determine this or assess any risks that could arise from not being able to verify staff's employment history.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development. receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	27 November 2022

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This relates to how leaders and managers respond to complaints of unprofessional relationships between staff members. The registered person should ensure that they address concerns fully so that children are not negatively affected due to inappropriate discussions between staff. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the Quality Standards' page 61 paragraph 13.1).

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: 2641767

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Real Care Support Limited

Registered provider address: 1st Floor, West Wing, Derby House, Lytham Road, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 8JE

Responsible individual: Peter Barron

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector

Dawn Walker, Social Care Inspector

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