

2643709

Registered provider: Williams Welfare Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. A private organisation operates this setting.

The manager has been registered since January 2024.

Inspection date: 15 February 2024

Date of last inspection: 6 June 2023

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector 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'.

Findings from the inspection

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

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that effective recruitment checks have been completed for staff. This means that they do not have all the relevant information to ensure that safe people work at the home. This is a repeated concern. Leaders and managers failed to meet a requirement in this area that was set in January 2024.
- Staff did not follow safeguarding procedures on the inspector's arrival at the home and they did not check any identification. These procedures are in place to protect children at the home.

There are currently two children living at the home. No children have moved in or out since the last inspection.

The assurance visit was brought forward due to a complaint received by Ofsted. The matters in the complaint were not substantiated during the inspection. However, areas of practice that need immediate attention were identified.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that effective recruitment checks have been completed for staff. Concerns about safer recruitment predate this inspection. In January 2024, Ofsted received information that led to a requirement being set in respect of recruitment. Leaders and managers have not taken appropriate action to address this.

At least two recruitment files did not contain all the relevant safe recruitment checks, and gaps in employment had not been explored. This means that leaders and managers do not have all the relevant information to ensure that safe people work at the home. In addition, a risk assessment that was completed in respect of information gained during the recruitment of a member of staff was factually inaccurate. This raises further concerns about the effectiveness of the recruitment process and the oversight of leaders and managers.

On arrival, staff did not check the inspector's identification documents. Therefore, a visitor was allowed to enter the home without appropriate checks taking place.

The manager has made some improvements in the general environment. However, some areas still need to be addressed. For example, the garden has broken pieces of crockery in several places, and the kitchen counter tops look worn and dated.

Children's bedrooms are personalised. However, one child's bedroom, while appearing tidy, had rotten food, old plates, and empty drinks cans in a drawer in their chest of drawers.

Children have a variety of plans; these are not always updated in accordance with significant events, and some important information is missing. This means that staff do not always have the most-up-to-date information to support children.

Children have made some positive progress at the home. For one child, this is the longest placement they have had. The social worker said that the child has engaged well with staff and it is clear that staff care about the child.

Another child has been supported to access an advocate and submit a complaint about his care plan. The complaint has been upheld and the child is being supported to follow the process through.

There are high staffing ratios. Staff know the children well. They can talk about the challenges that children experience and the strategies they use to help them.

Children do not go missing from home very often. When they do, staff make good attempts to locate them. The records are well kept, and the manager requests return-home interviews.

Since the last inspection, there have been eight safeguarding incidents requiring notification to Ofsted. Two of these were notified late to Ofsted. The six most-recent incidents have been notified promptly, indicating some recent progress in this area.

The newly registered manager has already made some improvements in the home. Staff spoke very positively about having her support. They said that she has an open approach. The manager works well with professionals. She received very positive feedback from professionals.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/06/2023	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Good

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (3)(a)(d))	8 April 2024
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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b)) In particular, ensure staff check people's identification before letting them into the home.	8 April 2024

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. In particular, ensure that children's plans are accurate, up to date, and include the required information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should provide a nurturing, homely environment. In particular, ensure that the garden is clear of hazards, such as broken crockery,

and refresh the kitchen downstairs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person must ensure that staff provide care which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account children's assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. In particular, ensure that children are supported to maintain a clean and hygienic bedroom. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14 paragraph 3.2)
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2643709

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Williams Welfare Ltd

Registered provider address: 81 Mount Pleasant, Ruislip HA4 9HQ

Responsible individual: Jemmina Angus

Registered manager: Alice Jennings

Inspector

Mary Costello, Social Care Inspector

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