

2645858

Registered provider: Helpful Investments Limited

Monitoring visit

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 three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were two children living in the home.

There is a manager in post who has not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 10 October 2022

This monitoring visit

This home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 31 August and 1 September 2022. Following this inspection, Ofsted issued three compliance notices, in respect of regulation 12, the protection of children standard, regulation 13, the leadership and management standard, and regulation 14, the care planning standard.

Ofsted also issued a notice restricting accommodation at the home. This notice had immediate effect, from 1 September 2022 until 24 November 2022.

During this monitoring visit, inspectors confirmed that the registered provider has complied with the conditions of the restriction notice.

Children's risk assessments have been reviewed; however, they still do not clearly identify children's known risks. Staff do not update children's risk assessments when a new risk emerges or when there is a change to an existing risk. This means that staff do not know or understand what children's current risks are.

Risk assessments do not provide staff with detailed strategies to follow to reduce risks to children, for example, when children are missing or returning home late, or to support children who self-harm.

Staff do not take swift and effective action in response to safeguarding incidents. The manager and the responsible individual have reviewed incident records, but they have not identified and addressed the shortfalls in safeguarding practice. They do not ensure that staff take further action to keep children safe and prevent incidents from reoccurring.

Children are still not receiving effectively planned care that addresses all of their needs. Staff do not know or understand children's individual needs because they do not have access to the most current and up-to-date plans for children's care.

Staff do not have access to children's health information and do not understand children's health needs. Staff have not had training in some relevant subjects, including self-harm and substance misuse. This lack of knowledge and understanding, together with ineffective care planning, has resulted in children's health needs not being met.

There have been delays to children receiving appropriate advice and support about their health needs. Children have not been administered medication that is prescribed for them. The manager and responsible individual withdrew one child's medication without seeking appropriate medical advice. They did not ensure that the child received follow-up care or alternative treatment. The manager and responsible individual have therefore failed to promote this child's health and well-being.

Poor routines continue to have a negative effect on children's experiences and progress. One child said that they struggle to sleep at night. The child has not received practical support or appropriate resources which could help them to follow a healthier routine. In the absence of support from staff, the child has relied on unhelpful and unsafe strategies which could be harmful.

Management monitoring arrangements have not improved sufficiently. Monitoring of staff training records, significant incidents and the quality of care provided to children has not improved. The responsible individual has developed a new monitoring tool; however, this has not yet been implemented. Ineffective monitoring of the care provided to children has resulted in children's needs not being met.

Staff have received some training since the last visit. However, oversight of the training that staff have undertaken is not thorough. Records of training in the home are not updated and do not give a clear overview of staff's training needs.

Supervision sessions do not provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on training or support them to improve their skills and practice. One staff member raised concerns, on two recent occasions, about outstanding training. The manager did not

address these concerns to ensure that the member of staff has the time to complete the required learning.

The responsible individual has revised the format for impact risk assessments. A theoretical exercise to evaluate this improved risk assessment is planned. As this has not yet been completed, improvements in the admissions process have not been evidenced.

No new staff have started working in the home since the last visit. Therefore, leaders and the manager cannot demonstrate improvements in recruitment processes. Despite the shortfalls identified at the last visit in relation to staff recruitment files, the manager and responsible individual have not audited all current staff's files. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that these files are compliant with safer recruitment practices. This also does not demonstrate that leaders and the manager understand the importance of adhering to processes which are intended to promote children's safety and welfare.

Requirements and recommendations made at the last visit were not reviewed as part of this inspection, therefore, these are restated below.

A case review was held following this monitoring visit. It was the decision of the case review that the compliance notices had not been met. Three further notices were issued in respect of regulation 12, the protection of children standard, regulation 13, the leadership and management standard, and regulation 14, the care planning standard.

Given the significant concerns regarding children's health needs, Ofsted also issued a compliance notice in respect of regulation 10, the health and well-being standard.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/03/2022	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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii))	20 November 2022
*The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and	20 November 2022

children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child’s relevant plans; understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding; understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children’s identified health needs, such as those identified in children looked after health assessments, are met. Additionally, the registered person should ensure that staff understand children’s individual health needs and support children to lead healthy lifestyles through good routines.	
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;	20 November 2022

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; 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; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)(xii)(xiii))	
*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;	20 November 2022

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi))	
*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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— 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)(g)(ii)(h))	20 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— that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and that each child's relevant plans are followed.	20 November 2022

(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(c)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that: robust assessments are made prior to moving children into the home; the assessments outline how staff will manage the potential impact of children moving into the home; the assessments should consider whether the staff working in the home have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the needs of potential new children.	
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home. Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that there are no restrictions on children being able to leave the home, unless this is directed for safeguarding reasons and the appropriate authority is in place.	20 November 2022
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children's records detail the correct medication and the correct dosage. Children must only administer their own medication if this is in accordance with the local authority plans for the child's care and is thoroughly risk assessed.	20 November 2022

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 child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)) Specifically, this relates to the use of external door alarms.	20 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, that references obtained are on file and have been scrutinised prior to an individual starting work, and that staff are not permitted to start working with children until their Disclosure and Barring Service certificate has been viewed and verified by the registered person.	20 November 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.	20 November 2022

The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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 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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and 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 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) Specifically, ensure that all incidents of restraint are recorded, including the occasions when staff use 'guiding' techniques.	
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; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;	20 November 2022

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1) (4)(a)(b) (7)(a))	20 November 2022

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This relates to the use of words such as 'resident', 'curfew' and 'absconding'. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2645858

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Helpful Investments Limited

Registered provider address: 31 Bridge Street, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 1QB

Responsible individual: Lesley Hearne

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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