

2659259

Registered provider: Chamberlain Residential Care Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It provides care for up to two children who have experienced childhood instability which has resulted in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

There has been no registered manager since October 2024. The interim manager has been in post since December 2024 and has submitted his application to register.

Inspection date: 7 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 17 December 2024, Ofsted received information raising concerns about the safety of children and the leadership and management of the home. As a result, Ofsted suspended the home's registration on 19 December 2024.

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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

At the time of this inspection, no children were living in the home. Since the last inspection, two children, who are siblings, have moved out of the home to return to their family home. No children have moved in. Both children were spoken to as part of this inspection.

Both children said that they 'felt safe' and that they had 'enjoyed' living in the home. Feedback from the children's parent was also positive. The parent said, 'Communication with staff was good. The children liked the home; they got to do activities and were doing well.' While professionals also shared positive feedback about the care that children received, two professionals felt that communication from leaders and staff could be improved.

Staff promote the importance of children's family time. This has enabled both children to regularly spend time with their father.' One professional said that staff and managers have supported and promoted the reunification process for both children and worked well with the children's father.

Since the last inspection, both children have continued to attend and engage with their education. Staff ensure that they attend meetings in school to support children to overcome barriers to their learning. As a result, children's attendance at school is good.

Children are protected by the organisation's effective recruitment practices. Staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. This helps to prevent unsuitable adults from working with children.

Staff's approach and practice are inconsistent in relation to safeguarding children who are at risk of going missing. For example, on one occasion, before a child went missing, staff failed to show professional curiosity or recognise signs that the child was upset and anxious. As a result, the child became further distressed and ran away from the home. However, staff responded immediately and followed the child's missing-from-home protocols. They worked effectively with the police and searched for the child, resulting in the child returning safely to the home. Inconsistent practice has the potential to compromise children's safety.

Management oversight of children's incidents requires improvement. For example, leaders do not ensure that children receive statutory return home interviews on their return to the home. In addition, managers have not addressed shortfalls in the quality of staff's recording of incidents. This lack of oversight hinders improvements being made to the quality of care for children.

Staff lack understanding of professional boundaries. On two occasions, staff have failed to follow the home's policies and procedures effectively. This does not support safeguarding practice or promote the welfare of children. While leaders have completed investigations and acted, they also recognise that the quality of their investigations is an area for improvement.

An independent person conducts external monitoring of the home every month. The visits do not fully focus on improving the home. In addition, the independent person does not regularly speak to children and seek their feedback. Consequently, external monitoring systems do not improve the quality of care for children.

The new manager understands the home's strengths and weaknesses. He has developed an action and training plan to improve staff practice. Staff have recently completed therapeutic training and training related to professional conduct. In addition, staff are being supported to develop through individual personal development plans.

One recommendation made at the last full inspection, relating to medication, was not reviewed at this visit and will be considered at the next full inspection.

As a result of this visit, the notice suspending the home's registration was lifted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/01/2024	Full	Good
27/02/2023	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 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vii)) In particular, leaders should ensure that staff understand the home's policies in relation to professional boundaries and how they should implement them to keep children safe. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	18 February 2025
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;	18 February 2025

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; 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)(a)(f)(h)) In particular, leaders should ensure that they frequently monitor and evaluate the quality of care children receive. This must take place at regular intervals. This includes the oversight and monitoring of incidents with children and when completing internal investigations. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, leaders should ensure that the independent person’s oversight of the home is robust and that they are seeking the views of children during their visits to the home.	18 February 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children’s medicines are ordered promptly to avoid any unnecessary delay. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 35, paragraph 7.15 and 7.17).
- 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. This specifically relates to the recording of consequences when issued to children and when completing children’s incident reports. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2659259

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Chamberlain Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 109 Sledmore Road, Dudley DY2 8DZ

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

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