

2666995

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties. It is owned by a private organisation.

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

There has been no registered manager since April 2022.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/04/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous inspection, leaders and staff have worked together to review all aspects of the home. Significant effort has been made to train staff and help them to work together to ensure consistent practice. This, combined with clear direction from leaders, has meant good preparation for when the home reopened and when a new child then moved into the home.

Ongoing progress for the child that has moved into the home has been supported through discussions at team meetings, some staff supervision and constant review of the child's care plans.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the child's individual needs. They ensure that the child is actively involved in choosing the daily activities that are in place.

The child makes good progress, especially in terms of education and their behaviour. Clear routines and consistent expectations from staff supported the child to settle quickly into the home and, as a result, the child has begun to thrive. When there is uncertainty about any aspects of care, staff are quick to consult with each other and external professionals. Social workers confirm that communication is good and that relationships in the home are positive.

Staff have good relationships with the child in the home. There are regular opportunities for 1:1 time with the child and trusted staff. Staff talk with the child to plan activities and trips out, which are always child led and focus on the individual interests of the child. In addition to this, the regular 1:1 sessions are also used to focus on specific areas relevant to the child. This has enabled the child to talk openly about how they feel about their care. Targets that the child achieves are shared and celebrated. This gives the child a sense of pride and belonging.

The child is supported well to prepare for their independence and future. This is due to them having age-appropriate tasks, such as preparing their washing and helping with the cooking. The child enjoys and remains engaged in these tasks because they formed part of the child's routine when moving into the home.

The child has had the opportunity to plan how their bedroom is decorated and presented. This has resulted in this space being really personalised. However, some of the communal areas lack homely details, such as decorations or pictures, meaning that these areas are sparse. Some areas of the home are not clean.

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

Detailed impact assessments ensured that risks are well known and understood by staff prior to the child moving into the home. Plans to reduce risk are regularly

updated and shared with staff, and staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's individual needs.

There have been no occasions when the child has gone missing from the home. Staff know children's behaviour well and use techniques to support them. This results in few physical interventions happening. Records relating to physical interventions and behaviour are used to inform changes in practice.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of risks in relation to the child and their previous behaviours and experiences, but also in relation to the local area. Leaders have made links with significant safeguarding professionals such as the police and the local authority designated officer. This further enhances the robust safeguarding arrangements that are in place to protect children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The responsible individual has clear views and expectations of for the home. Despite this, there have been ongoing challenges with the registered manager position. The previous manager left the home in April 2022. A new manager was appointed and joined the home in July 2022. However, this manager has been absent for a significant period since joining.

In the absence of the manager, the responsible individual oversees the home and works closely with the staff team. Daily monitoring of the home is carried out by several managers from across the organisation. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the reviewing and monitoring processes of the home and staff practice. External monitoring has been changed with the introduction of a new independent visitor. Some positive feedback on the quality of the care the child receives has been provided as result. This does provide the home with an additional layer of monitoring, but does not fully address the internal inconsistencies due to the absent manager.

Staff supervision, when it takes place, is reflective and provides staff with a good opportunity to discuss the impact of their work. However, there have been gaps in staff supervision sessions during significant periods of time at the home due to the absence of the manager. Fundamentally, these have been at the planning stage for the new child moving in and just after they moved in. This has not allowed staff to be able to reflect on what has worked well or plan any areas that may need to change.

Staff talk positively about the responsible individual and her work in the home. They are clear that she has held the team together in a challenging period and has kept staff motivated when managers have not done so. Staff say that they are well supported.

Leaders demonstrate good communication with social workers and challenge them effectively when information regarding the child moving into the home was not

sufficient. This has helped to form a positive care plan for the child and appropriate support for their successful placement in 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
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, there should be arrangements in place to ensure that the monitoring and reviewing systems are consistently implemented in the absence of the manager.	30 November 2022
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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that there is a manager in day-to-day charge of the home.	30 November 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	30 November 2022

The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))	30 November 2022
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the premises are clean and homely.
(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2666995

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 4, Northbrook Industrial Estate, Hollybrook Road, Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 6PB

Responsible individual: Luencina Zankl

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Mark Newington, Social Care Inspector
Tony Waite, Social Care Inspector

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