

2668789

Registered provider: Apsley Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home was registered with Ofsted on 22 June 2023. It is registered to care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties. The children's home is run by an experienced registered manager.

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

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children's progress is not good. Staff are unable to motivate the children to participate in usual day-to-day activities. As a result, both children have poor routines. Although staff try to wake the children in the morning, the children refuse to wake up until the afternoon. Consequently, both children are often awake during the night.

The manager is trying hard to secure an education placement for both children. However, staff are unable to motivate the children to engage in learning or to speak to tutors when they visit the home. Both children do not yet recognise their potential. This is because the staff have not been able to inspire the children through creative learning opportunities.

Staff arrange health appointments for both children. However, staff cannot motivate the children to attend. Staff cook the children healthy food, but the children are not awake to eat the meals and so the food goes untouched. It is unclear whether the children are eating appropriately because both often make their own food during the evening. The manager does limit the amount of ultra-processed food in the house to try to encourage the children to have an improved diet.

Both children like where they live, and they have formed a friendship with one another. They will go out with staff to have their nails done or go shopping. Staff try to build meaningful relationships with the children. However, the children's disengagement is a significant obstacle, which staff have struggled to overcome.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There is a pattern of both children going missing from the home. This is slowly decreasing, but remains a concern. When the children have gone missing from the home, the staff have worked closely with the police to help find the children and to bring them home. However, there has been an over-reliance on the support of the police. This is because the children do not respond to the calls made by the staff. The absence of any meaningful relationships between the staff and the children means that the children will not share their whereabouts or tell staff who they are with. This leaves the children vulnerable.

Relationships in the community between the children, staff and neighbours are strained. This has led to the children being criminalised due to them participating in anti-social behaviour and keeping neighbours awake during the night. On these occasions, staff supervise the children and try to encourage them to stop their negative behaviour. However, staff are unable to enforce boundaries or incentivise the children to improve their behaviour.

On occasion, children have made allegations against members of staff. Although there are some records of these allegations having been responded to, this has not been to a good standard. Recordings do not evidence the required level of investigation, outcomes or managerial oversight. There has been one incident where a child made a complaint following a physical intervention. Staff did not record this physical intervention and managerial oversight of the incident was poor. There have been several incidents that have not been reported to Ofsted.

Staff are unable to enforce expected boundaries regarding the children's use of vaping. As a result, the children are vaping inside the house. This is a significant fire risk. Children regularly talk to unknown people on their mobile phones. There is little professional curiosity shown by staff about who the children may be talking to. This lack of professional scrutiny leaves both children at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Overall, the manager has not been able to implement appropriate routines and boundaries for the children. As a result, neither child is achieving good outcomes and their episodes of going missing at night-time are leaving them vulnerable. The manager is working hard and trying her best to support the staff in caring for the children. However, so far, her approaches have been unsuccessful.

The staff team is new and, although staff are enthusiastic, they lack experience and knowledge of residential childcare. Although the frequency of supervisions has improved over the last two months, these are not focused or purposeful. For example, it is unclear from the supervision records how children's progress is being worked towards.

At times, the language used by staff to the children can be institutionalised. For example, children are regularly referred to as 'YPs' in conversations.

Due to the inexperience of the staff, once the manager leaves for the day there is no leadership in the home. This leaves staff without clear direction. The responsible individual has responded to this concern and is implementing a new strategy to try to meet this shortfall.

Although the house is well presented downstairs, children's bedrooms are not consistently maintained to an acceptable standard. Staff are trying to incentivise children to keep their bedrooms tidy. However, this does not always work. When children refuse or are unable to keep their bedrooms tidy, staff do not take steps to ensure that children are sleeping in a hygienic, uncluttered, well-maintained environment.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— 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; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (c)(d)) This specifically relates to the registered person needing to escalate concerns effectively to ensure that children's needs are met.	13 December 2023
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child.	13 December 2023

(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(vi)(c)(i)) This specifically relates to the registered person needing to implement and enforce clear boundaries and routines for children.	
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. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) This specifically relates to the registered person needing to implement a routine for children that facilitates learning. Further advocacy is needed to ensure that children are provided with an education placement.	13 December 2023
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child’s interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child’s interests and preferences; and make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	13 December 2023

This specifically relates to the registered person needing to motivate and engage children in activities that will promote their well-being. Children should be supported to understand what it means to be a good citizen.	
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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; 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; that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e)) This specifically relates to the registered person needing to improve their response to and oversight of allegations. In addition, staff should be supported to develop professional scrutiny and curiosity, and the registered person should not allow children to vape in the house. Children should be dissuaded from vaping whenever possible.	13 December 2023
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—	13 December 2023

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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; 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; 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; 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)(b)(c)(d)(f)(h)) In particular: • The registered person needs to ensure that staff understand how to care for children in line with the home's statement of purpose. • There needs to be clear leadership for staff and children throughout the day and night. • Staff supervisions should be regular. Children's progress should be evaluated in supervision, and staff should be given clear direction as to how to care for children. • The registered person should ensure that staff follow all policies and procedures. • Language should be child-friendly and not unnecessarily institutionalised.	
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 name of the child;	13 December 2023

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; 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 name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; 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 (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff and children are clear as to what the expectations and boundaries are for children's behaviour. In addition, records of restraints should be recorded and evaluated within timescales.	
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;	13 December 2023

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.

A notification made under this regulation—

must include details of—

the matter;

the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and

any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter;

must be made or confirmed in writing.

(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))

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: 2668789

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Apsley Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 10 Valentine Place, Stanground South,
Peterborough PE2 8WG

Responsible individual: Abel Changa

Registered manager: Claire Robinson

Inspector

Andi Lilley-Tams, Social Care Inspector

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