

2668789

Registered provider: Apsley Care Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private provider. 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 date: 25 March 2024

Date of last inspection: 11 October 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be 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 did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The children's educational attainment has been a priority for the manager and staff since the last inspection. The manager has advocated well to ensure that bespoke educational settings are now available for both children. Unfortunately, children are struggling to regularly engage in learning. As a result, academic progress for children remains limited.

Children can engage regularly in one-to-one sessions with staff. Staff are proactive to use these sessions to build relationships with children. Staff encourage children and engage with these sessions positively. For one child staff have been creative to establish a way that they can communicate how they are feeling in a way that is manageable for them.

There are clear care plans and risk assessments for each child. These support staff to think about the triggers to children's behaviours and how to support children to improve behaviour. Children are consulted about their plans and understand the focus of their care in the home. Some known risks to children were not included in their plans. Staff are not yet guided on how to approach and respond to presenting behaviours.

Incidences of children going missing from care have reduced as have other serious incidents in the home. Children are choosing to spend increasing periods of time in the home and alongside staff. Where children have gone missing from care, staff have not always responded according to the child's risk assessments and have not consistently searched the local area whilst children remain missing.

Staff have not always recognised when there has been a significant incident in the home and recorded it accordingly. Consequently, follow up action such as debriefs with children have not always been actioned. The manager is not yet ensuring that a robust reflection is undertaken with staff and that staff understand the policies in place to keep children safe.

The manager has been proactive to address the requirements of the last inspection. Team meetings have focussed on developing staff competence and encouraging staff to own improvements in their practice. This has been supported by the introduction of lead roles for staff.

Staff are receiving regular supervisions which are reflective of their progress and set actions for staff to work towards. Where there are concerns about staff practice these are addressed by the manager quickly. Not all supervisions discuss children's progress or potential safeguarding concerns. As a result, opportunities to learn and reflect could be missed.

Staff receive regular training. Specialist training has been identified to support staff in caring for a child who has recently moved to the home and whom has additional needs.

The manager has started to develop systems whereby she can track the progress of children in the home and the impact of the care being offered to children. She remains committed to ongoing improvements at the home and ambitious for children in her care.

There have been several serious incidents in the home that were not notified to Ofsted. This means that Ofsted cannot be assured that the correct actions have been taken by staff to safeguard children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, 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. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) This specifically relates to the registered person needing to implement a routine for children which facilitates learning and for children to be engaged with their educational settings regularly.	06 May 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 staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that areas signed to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;	06 May 2024

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 supporting staff to develop professional scrutiny and curiosity. Staff should be able to identify a serious incident in the home and know the appropriate action to take to manage any risks.	
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; 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)) The registered person needs to ensure that staff understand how to care for children in line with the home's statement of purpose.	06 May 2024

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. Staff should be given clear direction as to how to care for children. The registered person should ensure that all policies and procedures are followed by staff. Language should be child-friendly and not unnecessarily institutionalised.	
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; 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 (a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)(5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	06 May 2024

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. Staff should 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. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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

Louise Copping, social care inspector

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