

2672566

Registered provider: Embrace Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider and provides care for up to three children. The home provides care to children with social and emotional difficulties.

A new manager has been appointed but is not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 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	requires improvement to be good
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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: 20 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children have positive relationships with staff. The manager and staff place the children's welfare at the centre of their practice. One child said that if they have any worries, they can talk to staff and they will listen.

One child who has recently left the home and one child who currently lives in the home are not attending school, and there is no education provision identified. The manager has attended education meetings and reviews. However, there is not sufficient challenge to ensure that children's educational needs are met. In addition, education, health and care plans are out of date.

One child has recently moved into the home, and they were welcomed sensitively and with the best possible planning. There is a robust referral process, which is used to assess the needs of children who already live in the home and the impact for children who may be new to the home. In addition, the manager assesses the experience, training and skills of the staff to make sure they can meet the child's needs. This ensures that there is a child-centred approach when making decisions about whether children should move into the home. However, some actions and training needs identified for staff within the initial assessment were not completed.

The manager and staff work with placing authorities and families to promote positive and meaningful family time, in line with agreed plans. Staff transport children to spend time with their family, despite this often being a long distance from the home. This means that children are able to maintain relationships with the people who are important to them.

The staff make sure that children have access to health and medical support when needed. Specialist external help, such as child and adolescent mental health services, is sourced when necessary.

The staff make sure that children have the opportunity to express their views, wishes and feelings through regular key-worker sessions and weekly meetings. This helps children to have an input into decisions about their day-to-day lives.

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

There are individual plans and risk management plans to give staff clear guidance and strategies to care for the children. However, these plans are not always reviewed or updated following significant events, meaning the information within the plans is not current or reflective of lessons learned from previous incidents.

Since the last inspection, there has been one occasion when a child has been held to keep them safe. The hold was reasonable and proportionate and was appropriately recorded and reported to relevant professionals. However, staff were not given the opportunity to reflect on the hold following the incident.

When it is necessary to complete a room search, they are conducted sensitively with the involvement of children where possible. Imposed consequences are reasonable and proportionate. However, they are not evaluated for their effectiveness. All incidents of control and discipline should have regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and effective.

When children go missing from care, there are clear and comprehensive plans in place for staff to follow. The manager and staff work collaboratively with external professionals, such as the local police and missing-from-home team, to ensure well-coordinated responses when children go missing from the home. Staff are proactive in their searches to locate children and support them to return home safely. However, children are not receiving independent return home interviews following their return to the home.

Leaders and managers have responded suitably when safeguarding concerns have been raised. They have taken all necessary action to investigate and address these complaints, ensuring that the needs of the child were prioritised throughout the process. The manager and staff work collaboratively with professionals to ensure that the children receive any necessary support and that their needs are met.

Direct-work sessions take place with the children to support their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. These are completed proactively, as well as in response to significant events.

Staff understand the risks for children and offer stability and consistency in response to their behaviours. One child is subject to a court-directed order restricting their movements. The manager and staff ensure that the child is supported with dignity and respect, while ensuring the conditions of the order are followed.

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

There is a manager in post who has applied to register with Ofsted. The manager shows an ambitious vision, with high expectations for what all children can achieve. However, this is not yet embedded into the home. The staff are positive about the manager and describe a supportive environment. Staff spoken to describe the manager as readily available to provide advice and guidance.

There is a consistent team of staff who are qualified in mandatory subjects. However, staff do not have training that is tailored to the specific individual needs of the children, such as court-directed orders, substance misuse, e-safety and self-harm.

Recruitment checks do not always explore gaps in employment. The provider needs to ensure that recruitment of staff is consistently robust and in line with regulation to ensure that all staff are safe to work with children.

When agency staff have been used, there are procedures in place to ensure safer recruitment is adhered to. Regular agency staff have been used where possible to ensure that the children are cared for by staff who know them. However, agency staff are not recorded on the rota, meaning there is no clear record of the times they have worked.

Staff do not receive frequent and effective supervision. This is a missed opportunity for the manager and staff to discuss staff practice and support development of the staff team. The manager has implemented a reflective practice tool. However, this is not yet used as a topic of discussion for the manager and staff member to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children.

There are gaps in respect of the manager's overall monitoring and review systems. This does not support the manager to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. For example, children's plans are not up to date and do not include all relevant information. In addition, placing authority plans are not available to all the staff.

The manager usually notifies Ofsted of significant events. However, there have been occasions when notifications have not been sent. This limits external monitoring of children's safety and welfare.

The home is warm and welcoming, with a homely feel. It is decorated to a high standard and is a nice place for children to spend time. However, there are some outstanding health and safety checks that need completing to ensure that all areas of the home are safe.

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; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; 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; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii)(viii)(x))	6 July 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.	6 July 2023

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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) The registered person must ensure that staff have completed training to meet the children’s individual needs. Specifically training for deprivation of liberty orders, self-harm, e-safety and substance misuse.	
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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children’s plans and risk assessments are updated following significant events and include current information.	6 July 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— 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))	6 July 2023
The registered person must ensure that all employees—	6 July 2023

undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that current placing authority care plans and education, health and care plans are available for staff.	6 July 2023
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	6 July 2023

any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	
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 or restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. 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; 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	6 July 2023

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)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that debriefs for staff following a restraint take place within timescales and discuss the restraint used. In addition, any imposed consequences must have their effectiveness evaluated.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. 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) (3)(d)) Specifically, ensuring that any gaps in employment are fully explored and recorded.	6 July 2023
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home. maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the home’s rotas contain a record of actual hours worked, including agency staff hours.	6 July 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in

place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.3)

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children while being a homely, domestic environment. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations. ('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: 2672566

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Embrace Care Limited

Registered provider address: 116 Duke Street, Liverpool, Lancashire L1 5JW

Responsible individual: Paul Wilcox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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