

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.

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

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

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 6 June 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
06/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's education needs are not being met. One child has not had an education provision identified since they moved into the home. Staff fail to implement a clear plan for educational activity in the home. Consequently, children are not ready and prepared for when an education provision is in place. Another child has had their education reduced to one hour per day, this is not sufficient to ensure that the child receives a suitable education. This has not been challenged by leaders, managers or staff. As a result, children's educational outcomes have been compromised and progress has not been made.

When children are new to the home their risks, needs and their impact on other children are not carefully considered. There are impact assessments and pre-admission risk assessments completed. However, these do not evaluate whether the children's needs can be met or whether staff have the skills and experience to support the children's complex needs.

Children do not benefit from consistent responses and support from the staff team. This is because in-house plans are not updated with current information and do not include sufficient details about children's risks and needs.

There has been a high turnover of staff which has meant that it has been difficult for children to establish positive and trusting relationships with the people caring for them. Children are encouraged to express their views and wishes and have raised complaints. However, when complaints have been raised, they are not always responded to by the managers. This stops children understanding what has happened as a result of their complaint.

Children are not supported to understand key decisions about their home which have had a direct impact on them, such as when a child moved out of the home without any notice or when staff stop working at the home. This does not help children to feel settled and secure in their home.

Children's health needs are met. Children are supported by staff to attend routine medical appointments such as the dentist, GP and opticians and are also supported to attend specialist appointments when necessary. There are suitable arrangements for the safe administration of medication. There have been errors in medication administration, but these have been acted upon and processes put in place to prevent re-occurrence.

Children are supported to take part in activities to meet their social, educational and health needs. One child often visits museums to encourage their interest in history and another child is supported to take part in sporting activities such as the gym, boxing, and football.

The home environment is warm and welcoming. However, one child's bedroom would benefit from additional window coverings to ensure that their privacy and dignity is respected.

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

There have been two safeguarding concerns which were raised due to poor staff conduct, staff and management not following safeguarding procedures, poor recording and poor oversight from management. Insufficient action was taken to address the concerns which resulted in the unplanned ending of the placements for two children.

On the occasions when children have been physically held the quality of recording of physical interventions is poor and not all physical interventions are recorded. There are no clear records of the method of hold used by staff, no staff debriefs following the event and no supportive follow up work completed with the children to help them understand why they have been held. There is no management oversight of these reports to consider if children were kept safe during these incidents, or to consider if the holds were reasonable, proportionate and necessary. This lack of accountability and learning places children at risk of unsafe practice.

When children have been missing from the home, records show a lack of information to consider what actions staff took to locate the children and ensure that they returned home safely. Managers have not reviewed these incidents and identified this shortfall in recording key information including how long children were missing for, when they returned or what action was taken to prevent a reoccurrence. Children have continued to be at risk by being missing from the home and poor staff practice has gone unchallenged by leaders and managers.

When children have been subjected to bullying, staff have not taken adequate action to safeguard all children living in the home. Direct work has not been completed with children to help them to understand the impact of bullying. Direct work sessions do take place with the children to explore key topics. However, there is a missed opportunity to support and educate the children on current risks and issues such as bullying.

Safer recruitment processes are not always followed. Not all recruitment checks have taken place and references are not always gathered from staff members last employers. This means that the provider cannot be confident that the staff are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Since the last inspection, there has been a number of changes to the leadership and management arrangements in the home. There is no registered manager. There is an interim manager who is in the process of submitting his application to register with Ofsted. Staff do not have confidence in the leadership of the home due to the turnover of managers since the last inspection. This has caused instability in the staff team.

Lack of management oversight has resulted in low staff morale, high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and a lack of challenge when staff are underperforming.

The new responsible individual and manager are in the process of assessing strengths and weaknesses in relation to the quality of care. There is a vision for what they want to achieve. However, there has not been enough time to embed the plans for improvement.

Staff do not understand their roles, responsibilities or accountabilities and are not confident making day-to-day decisions about the children's basic care. Staff do not have the confidence to challenge the children when needed or to have difficult discussions with the children regarding key topics such as bullying and behaviour management.

Staff are not receiving regular practice-related supervision. This means there is no opportunity for staff to reflect on their performance or to gain individualised support from senior staff to improve their development.

Staff have completed mandatory training, however they have not all completed training in topics to meet the children's individual needs such as Autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and bullying.

The statement of purpose does not accurately reflect the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care. In addition to this, the statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted following any updates, this affects external monitoring of 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 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— 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. (Regulation 12(1) (2)(vi)) Specifically, the registered person must take action to report any allegations of harm to the appropriate professionals and take suitable action to respond to and investigate any allegations and/or safeguarding concerns.	2 June 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— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;	2 June 2024

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. (Regulation 12(1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vi)(vii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that when children are missing from the home, staff take appropriate action to locate them and return them home. Any action taken must be recorded and evaluated by the registered person.	
*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; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— 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)(e)(f)(g)(h))	2 June 2024

Specifically, the registered person must have suitable oversight of records of significant events and use monitoring and review systems to make improvements when needed. In addition to this, the registered provider must ensure that staff have training in subjects to meet the children's individual needs such as autism, ADHD and anti-bullying.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	2 June 2024
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; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; 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	2 June 2024

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)(iii)(iv)(vi)(vii)(viii)(x)) Specifically, the registered provider must ensure that children have access to appropriate education provision. When this is not provided the registered provider must challenge this with the relevant professionals.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff- de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xi)(xii)(xiii))	2 June 2024
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;	2 June 2024

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 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or 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) (2)(a) (3)(d))	2 June 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	2 June 2024

The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1)(5)) Specifically, the registered provider must ensure that the home's statement of purpose is accurate when describing the conditions of registration. In addition to this, any updates to the statement of purpose must be sent to Ofsted.	2 June 2024
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*This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that the home meets children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. Children's bedrooms should have suitable window coverings to ensure that their privacy and dignity is respected. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: Sally Hallwood

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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