

2673338

Registered provider: Theracare Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It can provide care for up to two children.

The manager was registered on 6 April 2022.

Inspection date: 2 November 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of last inspection: 27 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the last full inspection, Ofsted issued three compliance notices, in relation to regulations 12, 13 and 14. A monitoring visit was carried out on 13 September 2022 to review the progress towards meeting the notices. Inspectors found that sufficient action had been taken to meet the notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/07/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

At the time of this inspection, there were no children living at the home. Inspectors looked at the experiences of children who have recently moved out of the home, by reviewing documentation and having discussions with staff and external professionals.

Serious and significant shortfalls were found in respect of the protection of children and the overall leadership and management of the home. These failures have significantly affected children's overall experiences and progress.

Staff have not been prepared to manage the known behaviours of children moving into the home and incident records indicate that children's behaviours have not been well. This resulted in a child's placement breaking down, resulting in the child being moved to a hotel.

Progress has been made since the last inspection in relation to required statutory documentation and assessments. A health assessment has been completed for a child and the manager had obtained an updated local authority care plan. Some clarification has also been obtained in respect of a child's learning needs and abilities. However, managers were unable to demonstrate that a local authority placement plan had been obtained.

Positively, staff and managers have supported a child to go on holiday. The child enjoyed a camping trip, when he went fishing. This was a positive experience for the child and was in line with his views and wishes.

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

There had been a significant increase since the previous inspection in episodes of children going missing from home. Some incidents have been for significant periods of time. Staff have been proactive in their responses and have actively tried to locate the child by searching known areas and making attempts to contact the child. On one occasion, staff have not followed the protocols and procedures in place. A member of staff posed as a child online to connect with the child and their contacts. This is not a recognised procedure for staff to follow and is not safe or appropriate practice.

Whistle-blowing procedures in the home are ineffective. There have been several occasions when staff have raised concerns about the practice of another team member. These serious concerns were not documented or notified to Ofsted or other relevant professionals, such as the local authority designated officer. This has significantly hindered children's safety and prevented the required external monitoring and review.

An incident occurred during which a member of staff was stopped by the police while transporting a child back from visiting their family. The police identified conduct that put the child at significant risk of serious harm. Furthermore, this resulted in the child being left in a distressing situation without the supervision of an appropriate carer.

Significant shortfalls were found in the recruitment and vetting of staff working in the home. One staff member's identity had not been appropriately verified. Furthermore, inspectors were unable to view evidence that all the necessary criminal records checks had been completed. Additionally, key references had not been requested. These gaps demonstrate a lack of robust procedures and poor monitoring and review of the suitability of those working in this home. This reduces children's safety and does not demonstrate that all those working in the home are safe to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to identify and assess significant risks posed to children by those who care for them. The unsafe conduct of one member of staff was documented by the manager and discussed with the member of staff but not appropriately addressed. These conduct issues resulted in children being at significant risk of harm.

Leaders and managers have failed to follow effective processes relating to staff management and recruitment. The manager demonstrates little understanding and oversight of these processes. The manager was not able to evidence that, since the last full inspection, he has been supported with the monitoring and review of the home by senior leaders. This lack of oversight and understanding of conduct issues and recruitment and vetting processes has led to children being placed in unsafe and harmful situations.

Several shortfalls were identified in the home's documentation. Records have not been kept appropriately in respect of management investigations and whistle-blowing concerns. Additionally, concerns identified in relation to staff practice have not been identified by managers when using monitoring and review processes. Poor record-keeping has hindered the care provided to children and the ability of others to review and evaluate children's safety. This means that children are not sufficiently protected from harm.

Due to the significant and serious shortfalls found at this inspection and no children living at the home, inspectors were unable to assess the progress made towards meeting the requirements made at the previous inspection. These are therefore restated.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)) This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	11 September 2022
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 and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that—	11 September 2022

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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and 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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)) In particular, review consequences to ensure that those given are proportionate, effective and in line with the children's needs and level of understanding. This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	11 September 2022
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;	11 September 2022

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. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	
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; 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; 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)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))	10 December 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. 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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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)(c)(h))	10 December 2022
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	10 December 2022
This regulation applies to a child who is looked after by a local authority. The registered person must co-operate with the child's placing authority in agreeing and signing the child's placement plan. (Regulation 17 (1) (2))	10 December 2022

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 if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and 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)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	10 December 2022
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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: 2673338

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Theracare Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 10 Ambassador Place, Stockport Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 8DB

Responsible individual: Simon Haddrell

Registered manager: Luke Tempest

Inspectors

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector
Nicola Clements, Social Care Inspector

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