

2675297

Registered provider: Closer 2 Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager is suitably experienced and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 22, 23 and 30 April 2025

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 and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 8 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: A compliance notice under regulation 13 was issued. This compliance notice has not been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/01/2025	Full	Inadequate
25/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to safeguard children in their care. Children have been exposed to exploitation because of the poor practice of staff. The manager lacks professional curiosity and staff have not been vigilant. Consequently, children have suffered harm.

The manager does not have a good understanding of the children's plans. For example, she does not know what restrictions are in place regarding a child's contact with their family. The manager has not discussed children's plans with the placing authority to ensure that these are appropriate and up to date, and this has resulted in some apps on a child's gaming device being restricted.

At the time of inspection, two children are living in the home. No children have moved out of the home since the last inspection. Both children were spoken with during the inspection. The children said that there have been changes made in the home, such as new blinds and carpets, and said that they felt happier living at the home.

Staff have better relationships with each other than they did at the last inspection. This has resulted in the children having better relationships with staff. One child has spent one-to-one time with a member of staff, attending activities together. The child said that this has helped to improve their relationship with the member of staff.

Children attend school regularly. This supports their learning and development. They are supported by staff if they have difficulties at school so that this does not impact their attendance and learning.

Children spoke about activities and trips that they have enjoyed. One child went on their first holiday and another celebrated living at the home for a period. These experiences offered to children provide positive memories of their time living at the home.

Children know how to complain, and their views are acknowledged by the manager. They are helped to understand what is happening as a result of their complaint.

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

A serious incident occurred when staff failed to implement a child's safety plan regarding online access. Staff were not vigilant, which enabled a child to access online communication with unsuitable adults. Staff did not know that the child had online access for four weeks, when external professionals alerted staff to this. Staff

lacked professional curiosity and were not vigilant. As a result, the child experienced online exploitation.

The manager does not have a good understanding of why a child has started to harm themselves again. She is not professionally curious and does not plan effectively for the child. Specialist help and support has not been sought for this child. This does not support the child with their emotional well-being.

Consequences issued to children are disproportionate and staff lack understanding of the home's approach to consequences as part of a nurturing approach. For example, a child received an inappropriate consequence, which resulted in the child harming themselves.

Staff do not have a good understanding of children's risks. Risk assessments have not been reviewed or updated, and some information is misleading and out of date. Risk assessments also lack detail and do not include specific strategies for staff to use in practice to support children and keep them safe. Consequently, children have not been kept safe.

There has been one incident when physical intervention was used. When the manager reviewed the incident record, she identified that alternative calming strategies were not used prior to the physical intervention taking place. However, the manager did not complete an internal investigation to explore staff practice or discuss the poor practice with the staff concerned. Furthermore, the child made a complaint about the intervention that indicated harm had occurred to the child during the intervention. The local authority designated officer was not informed or consulted until this was identified at the inspection. This means that poor practice has gone unchallenged.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers' monitoring of the home does not address shortfalls in safeguarding practice and the quality of care provided to children. They do not take opportunities to reflect and learn to improve the safety of children and the quality of care. There is insufficient exploration of serious incidents and concerns, which has compromised children's welfare, experiences and progress. For example, staff were unaware that a child obtained a mobile phone, which resulted in the child being exploited.

Staff training is not specific to children's individual needs. For example, staff do not possess suitable skills to understand how to care for children who are neurodiverse. Training for one member of staff is out of date and has been outstanding for over 12 months. The manager has not identified this or took action to ensure that the member of staff has the appropriate knowledge and skills to continue to carry out their role of caring for children.

The manager has failed to identify risk regarding an historical incident. Despite not knowing the context, this information has been shared with other professionals. The manager has not reported to the social worker when the child has talked about the incident with staff. Furthermore, conversations that the child has had with staff about this incident have not been recorded. The manager has not advocated well for the child because she has not kept the risk under review. Consequently, the child missed an opportunity for work experience in their preferred placement.

Leaders and managers have implemented new monitoring systems. However, the monitoring systems have failed to address shortfalls in the quality of care provided to children. The manager does not take opportunities to reflect and learn to improve the quality of care provided to children.

New members of staff have been recruited since the last inspection and there has been a reduction in the use of agency staff. There has also been changes to the management structure. The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual, and the regulator is currently checking that this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

Leaders and managers have failed to meet the actions set out in a compliance notice following an inadequate judgement.

Due to the shortfalls identified, a restriction notice preventing the home providing further accommodation to children has been issued. Additionally, due to continued concerns about the practice within this home, a notice of proposal to cancel has also been served.

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
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; 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)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) This specifically relates to staff having the correct skills in order to identify when children are at risk of harm and take effective action to safeguard them. Risk assessments need to be up to date and regularly reviewed by the manager so that they are detailed and have clear strategies in place to support staff to care for and support children.	4 June 2025

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— 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)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that there are effective monitoring tools in place to address shortfalls in the quality of care provided to children. Leaders and managers must use these tools to reflect and learn to improve the quality of care provided to children.	4 June 2025
The care planning standard is that children— have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that plans are in place to adequately prepare children for moving on from the home.	4 June 2025

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: 2675297

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Closer 2 Home Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Newington Close, Coventry CV6 1PQ

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Charlotte Love, Social Care Inspector
Chrisoula Contoyianni, Social Care Inspector

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