

# 2675423

Registered provider: Eliali MPC Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home registered in February 2023 and is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted when the home opened in February 2023.

**Inspection date: 27 November 2023**

**Date of last inspection:** 21 June 2023

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, 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 identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- Poor management oversight leading to ineffective responses to increasing risks for children at risk of exploitation.
- A lack of clear, consistent, up-to-date and accurate guidance for staff on how to manage risks or meet children's needs.
- A failure to follow existing risk assessments and guidance when children go missing.
- A lack of adequate learning opportunities being provided for children in the home.
- A lack of appropriate action in response to children's health needs in respect of substance misuse, vaping and sleep hygiene.

This inspection was brought forward because of concerning notifications received by Ofsted relating to the safety of children.

Since the last inspection, two children have moved into the home and one has moved out. At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

Ineffective monitoring and a lack of professional curiosity mean that the manager does not have sufficient oversight of the home. The manager has failed to respond effectively to children's increasing risks and risk management strategies have remained the same. This means children are not being kept sufficiently safe.

Children are at serious risk of criminal and sexual exploitation when missing from home. Leaders and managers have not ensured that risk assessments fully recognise these risks or wider implications, such as potential gang affiliation. Strategies to mitigate risks are unclear and contradictory. This means staff do not have good enough guidance to respond when children are missing from home.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that responses when children go missing from home are strong enough. It is unclear when children should be reported missing or what efforts staff should make to contact them when they are missing. Despite children's risks, they are often not reported as missing to police for over an hour. This means that external partnerships are not used effectively to safeguard children. Staff do not consistently follow guidance that is in place. Risk assessments state that a child is to be accompanied when they are out of the home and, when they are missing, staff are to search areas of concern. Reports of children going missing show that staff do not follow these instructions. This means staff are not taking appropriate steps to find children when they are missing.

Managers have not identified poor practice. When staff have not followed risk assessments, managers have evaluated that staff have followed procedure. This means that staff do not receive relevant guidance and support to ensure safe and effective care is provided to the children when they are missing from home.

Despite the risks of exploitation, children have full access to mobile phones. These are not checked, and children keep hold of them overnight. The risks relating to this have not been fully explored by managers. This means children are potentially constantly accessible to unsafe people and those who may exploit them, without appropriate safeguards in place.

At the time of the inspection, leaders and managers had accepted a referral for a third child. The impact risk assessment for the third child does not accurately reflect the presenting risks for the children living in the home. The impact risk assessment states that risks of going missing and criminal exploitation risks for children living in the home are low, however, this is not the reality. This misleads placing authorities.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff have received training in subjects related to children's risks, such as county lines, gang affiliation, knife crime and substance misuse. Staff have not been given the appropriate knowledge and skills to support the children safely in accordance with their relevant plans.

Leaders, managers and staff do not provide the children with good routines. Care plans state that children have poor sleep hygiene, however, there is no guidance for staff to help children develop good sleep hygiene. One child's daily plan states that the child wakes up late. During the inspection, children were in their bedrooms all day, with little interaction attempted by staff.

Leaders, managers and staff do not ensure that children are provided with adequate learning opportunities. Both children are out of school. Education planners for the children are ineffective and do not reflect their needs or interests. This lack of structured activity, together with no routine, does not support children to prepare for education and does not provide a diversion from unsafe options.

Children's health needs are not met. Children use vapes and misuse substances. Staff do not respond adequately to these issues. Consequently, children are not learning about the importance of making healthy choices.

Care plans are of poor quality. They lack sufficient detail and do not give staff the information they require to meet children's needs.

Leaders and managers do not always ensure that they notify Ofsted of serious incidents in the home. On several occasions when they have notified Ofsted, the notification has not been done in a timely manner.

A social worker gave positive feedback about the holistic care provided to a child at the home.

Four requirements were made at the last inspection. Three of these have been met.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 21/06/2023      | 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, 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       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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)(f)(h))</p> | 1 January 2024 |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 1 January 2024 |

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| <p>necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare;</p> <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                             |                       |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally.<br/>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(iv)(v))</p> <p>In particular, ensure children have structured educational routine in the home that includes informal learning that meets their interests and needs.</p> | <p>1 January 2024</p> |
| <p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>The health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>1 January 2024</p> |

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| <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, support children to improve their sleep hygiene and provide clear guidance on how to support children who use vapes and misuse substances.</p> |                       |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>1 January 2024</p> |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.<br/>(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(e))</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>1 January 2024</p> |

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 2675423

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Eliali MPC Limited

**Registered provider address:** Tax Assist Accountants, 476 St Albans Road,  
Watford WD24 6QU

**Responsible individual:** Susan Nganga

**Registered manager:** Bobby Muraya

## Inspector

Hannah Phillips, Social Care Inspector

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