

2677302

Registered provider: North West Youth Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider owns and manages this home. The home provides care for up to three children, up to the age of seventeen. The children living in the home may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or a learning disability. There are currently two, very young children living in the home. The home was approved for registration in July 2022. The manager who was approved at the time has since left the home. There is currently no registered manager. A new manager started in post in February.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 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: Not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of care for the children living at this home is not yet good enough. One child left the home because the staff were unable to help the child make any significant progress from their starting point. Managers decided the child's needs were too complex for them and that the child would be more suited to a specialist home. Some of the staff were unable to manage the child's complex needs, and other issues led to a high turnover of staff. Consequently, children have experienced lots of changes of staff, including the manager, deputy manager and several care workers.

Staff support the current children to attend school. They offer additional support to children so that they can remain in school and learn alongside their peers. One professional said that support from staff has been essential in promoting school attendance. When children were not engaging in or able to attend school due to their complex needs, staff tried to support them through educational activities in the home. This meant the child had limited learning and social opportunities.

Staff are working hard to provide consistent care for the children. Professionals speak positively about the day-to-day care offered to the children.

The children are starting to build trusting relationships with staff. One child said he liked his new home and felt staff were nice, 'especially [name of staff]'.

Children know how to make a complaint and are supported by staff to share their views. One child expressed their worry about attending a medical appointment that would enable staff to offer appropriate support. Staff support children to have access to required health services.

The children enjoy participating in their chosen activities, such as dancing and swimming. Staff take children on outings to the seaside and parks. This gives children the opportunity to have positive experiences, build memories and develop relationships with staff and each other. One child spent little time out of the home due to their complex needs. Managers reflected on the care offered to the child, resulting in the decision for the child to move to a more specialist home.

Children's moves into the home are planned and thought out. Arrangements welcoming the children into the home are aligned with the children's individual needs.

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

Staff and managers failed to provide a timely response during an incident involving a child at school. They failed to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures and delayed

informing the placing authority. This led to a delay in the local authority notifying the designated officer.

An allegation made by a child is being investigated, but there was a delay in management notifying other professionals. The actions taken in response to the allegation against a member of staff were not aligned to good safeguarding practice. This does not ensure that children's physical and emotional needs are prioritised to keep children safe.

Children enjoy time outside in the garden. However, the managers have not ensured the environment is safe and well maintained. Loose bricks from the garden wall presented a safety hazard for the children. During the visit, the playroom door was locked, and the key was with a staff member who was off site. This is a concern because the playroom window is an upstairs fire exit that should always be accessible.

The children's risk assessments and plans provide staff with strategies to respond to children's needs and to help and protect them. Staff work with a specialist service that offers advice and support in areas such as 'positive parenting'. This means that staff are advised about how to help children understand positive behaviours. Interventions used to support children's emotional and behavioural needs are appropriate. One child enjoys earning tokens as part of the positive behavioural incentives. This leads to children earning rewards of their choice.

Children are only held as a last resort. Only one hold has been recorded. This was in line with the legislative framework.

Children do not go missing from the home. Due to their very young age, they are closely supervised. Staff report no concerns regarding bullying, and the children are developing appropriate peer relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The home has been without a registered manager since 6 January 2023. During this time, the responsible individual and the director were regularly involved in the running of the home. This was a period of instability for both staff and children. Some staff noted that the morale in the home declined. There is now a newly appointed manager, who started in post on 23 February 2023. Staff spoke about currently feeling supported and motivated to care for children.

Monitoring systems are weak and do not support the manager to have a good understanding of the quality of care for children. Not all serious incidents have been shared with the regulator. This prevents Ofsted from having an overview of the care provided to children.

Management records relating to staff training are poor. They do not support the manager to have a good understanding of the staff's training requirements. The

management has, however, facilitated weekly training from external specialists to help staff offer the children greater individual care.

Not all staff receive regular supervision, including agency staff. This means staff do not consistently have essential guidance and support to develop their practice.

The management has not actively reviewed the quality of care offered to the children. External monitoring by an independent person does take place monthly.

The home is staffed to meet the needs of the two children.

The responsible individual is a regular visitor to the home. He has recently introduced improved induction plans. These are more focused around required objectives, but these are very recent changes that have not yet been embedded.

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; 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 act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they report any concerns without delay and ensure appropriate consideration is given to children's health needs. In particular, the registered person needs to ensure premises used for the purposes of the home, are accessible to the children and staff, including all fire exits and undertake maintenance in outside areas and remove any hazards which could impact on children's health.	7 April 2023
The leadership and management standard are 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	7 April 2023

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)) In particular, the registered person must include systems to ensure improvements in the quality and frequency of staff supervision and put systems in place to monitor and review staff's development, training and qualifications.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e)) In particular, the home should ensure that information that could lead to a child protection inquiry is shared.	7 April 2023
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality-of-care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children: the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality-of-care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality-of-care review and the actions which the registered person	7 April 20223

intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").

The registered person must—

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality-of-care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality-of-care review is completed: and

make a copy of the quality-of-care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

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: 2677302

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North West Youth Services Limited

Registered provider address: Peine House, Hind Hill Street, Heywood OL10 1JZ

Responsible individual: Carl Pixton

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

Parveen Hussain, Social Care Regulatory Manager

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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