

# 2691652

Registered provider: Purple Ash Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager since 1 July 2023.

### Inspection dates: 15 and 16 August 2023

**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 or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

**Date of last inspection:** 16 May 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

### Enforcement action since last inspection:

At the previous full inspection, one compliance notice was issued under regulation 13. This compliance notice was not met at the point of this full inspection.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 16/05/2023      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 17/01/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

Children have not been listened to. When a child reported an allegation about a staff member, this was not investigated for five weeks. The acting manager did not address this concern effectively. When a second child raised a concern in relation to being injured during a restraint, this was also not investigated. This prevents children from feeling heard and being safe.

The staff team works closely with the virtual school and has identified and sourced some education and in-house tutoring for children. Each child has a planner, outlining their educational activities and setting out clear expectations. Staff hold regular meetings with specialist agencies to consider how children's needs will be met. Although managers and staff work tirelessly to ensure that suitable education packages are identified for each child, attendance and engagement remain a challenge for children.

The children have many opportunities to participate in various activities. These include one-to-one activities with staff and group activities. Children have thoroughly enjoyed a house holiday. Staff commented on how the holiday helped them build even stronger relationships with the children. Children said that they had lots of fun.

Staff recognise how important it is for children to maintain links with family members who are important to them. One child has increased the time he spends with his family at the family home, which he is pleased about. Staff ensure that children and their families can make positive memories together. As a result, children continue to feel part of their families and maintain their sense of identity.

Children work well with staff when undertaking individual key-work sessions. Staff plan these sessions around issues impacting on the child's life. The one-to-one time provides an opportunity for the child to have some quality time with staff to explore their feelings and emotions.

Despite changes within the staff team, children build trusted relationships with staff in a short space of time. This is a credit to staff's ability to establish a rapport with children very quickly.

Children learn practical independence skills. Staff support children to learn new skills. This increases their self-confidence and sense of belonging. It prepares them in developing practical skills for their eventual transition to adult life.

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

Staff failed to contact the emergency services for 17 minutes when a child needed urgent medical assistance. The manager failed to identify the impact of this delay on

providing prompt healthcare to a child. The acting manager informed the inspector that a waking night staff member had been implemented to monitor the child overnight. However, records evidence that this did not take place. As a result, the child was at risk of increased harm should they have become unwell again.

Frequent phone checks have not been completed in line with a child's risk assessment. Despite missing-from-home incidents and the child being at risk of exploitation, staff have failed to ensure that the child remains safe online. The child refused to hand their phone in to staff for four days, and when this was handed in, staff failed to check the phone for four days. This leaves the child at increased risk of exploitation.

Children's plans and assessments have not been updated following a change in health needs. A child's risk assessment was not updated for three weeks to reflect this new risk. As a result, during this time, staff were not provided with good enough guidance to ensure the safety of the child. This has not equipped staff with the skills and knowledge they need to keep the child safe.

Restraint records do not include all required information. Furthermore, they are not reviewed by a member of the management team who is impartial to the incident. As a result, concerns have not been identified when a child was continuously held for 10 minutes. The child informed staff that they were injured as a result of being held and were not offered medical attention. This places children at increased risk of harm, and concerns have not been explored.

During the visit, a safeguarding concern was identified relating to staff not following the missing-from-home protocol when a child went missing. The child was placed at increased risk through staff inaction. The child debrief in relation to this incident was not completed by the manager for almost two months after the incident. This lapse in monitoring places children at risk, and every effort should be made to ensure that this situation is not repeated.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

There continue to be serious shortfalls in relation to effective management oversight and monitoring. An acting manager is in post, and despite progress being made in some areas, the compliance notice has not been met for a second time. Other concerns have now been escalated under regulation 12, and a further compliance notice has been issued.

Management monitoring systems are poor. The acting manager has not identified shortfalls in practice and has not thoroughly evaluated incident records and risk management strategies. For example, managers have approved risk management plans when they have not included all the required information.

The arrangements for the administration and recording of children's medication remain inadequate. Staff failed to administer a child's prescribed medication because

they suspected the child was under the influence of an unknown substance. Staff failed to seek medical advice in response to this concern or follow the child's risk assessment. In addition, the manager had not identified tablets that were not accounted for in medication administration records. These concerns had not been identified by the manager within medication audits and have not been investigated.

Staff failed to follow the assessment in place for the safe storage of the home's keys. As a result, a child was able to gain possession of the home's car key without staff being aware. This has the potential to place children and others at risk of harm. The child returned the key to staff six hours later. The manager's evaluation stated that learning from this near miss would be discussed in the next team meeting. However, this was not discussed, which prevents lessons from being learned.

Serious shortfalls with management monitoring and review systems have resulted in a significant delay in an allegation being investigated. The allegation was brought to the attention of the manager by the independent visitor. It was investigated by the manager five weeks after it was initially reported by a child to staff.

Local authority plans for one child are out of date. The manager has failed to make efforts to escalate concerns that there is not an up-to-date care plan. As a result, the manager has not been able to ensure that the local authority plan informs the child's relevant plans. This is an impediment to good care planning.

Leaders and managers have failed to follow safeguarding procedures. Ofsted has not been alerted to serious safeguarding concerns as required by regulation. This impairs the regulator's oversight in reviewing notifications and taking necessary action to ensure the safety of children.

## 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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;</p> <p>help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child;</p> <p>regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care.<br/>(Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p> <p>This is in relation to ensuring that children's wishes and feelings are sought and acted on. It also relates to making sure that complaints made by children are thoroughly investigated, including children receiving medical treatment when they inform staff that they have been injured during restraint.</p> | 11 September 2023 |
| <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>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 25 August 2023    |

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| <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</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; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</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;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that risk management plans reflect the needs of children and include guidance on how staff should respond to risks and that staff adhere to the agreed plans and assessments. It also relates to ensuring that staff understand their role and responsibility in safeguarding children, alerting medical professionals without delay when there are concerns about a child's health.</p> |                       |
| <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>25 August 2023</p> |

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| <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>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>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</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)(f)(g)(ii)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers embedding monitoring systems in the home to improve the quality of care.</p> |                          |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers ensuring that the child's care plan is accurate and up to date.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>11 September 2023</p> |
| <p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>11 September 2023</p> |

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| <p>a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child.<br/>(Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that medication is administered in line with the prescribed instructions. It also relates to ensuring that accurate records are maintained for medicines administered to or refused by a child.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that records of physical intervention are reviewed in a timely manner and that child debriefs are completed within the required timescale.</p> | <p>11 September 2023</p> |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.<br/>(Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>11 September 2023</p> |

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## **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:** 2691652

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

**Registered provider:** Purple Ash Limited

**Registered provider address:** West Midlands House, Gipsy Lane WV13 2HA

**Responsible individual:** Anita Sharma

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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