

2694804

Registered provider: SW Education & Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to two children. At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home. They met with the inspectors.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023. The manager was not present during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

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/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 12 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/11/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Poor leadership and management of the home have resulted in staff failing to keep the child safe. Managers have not embedded the organisation's ethos and culture and so do not provide the child with the care and support they need. Staff do not intervene effectively to prevent the child being harmed.

Staff ensure that the child has interesting and varied activities to occupy their time. The child spends time with staff playing card games, doing puzzles and arts and crafts, and playing board games. While the child has structure to their day, there is a lack of planning or routine to include opportunities beyond the home. The child spends most of their time at home. Consequently, this is limiting their opportunities to develop skills for adult life.

Staff support the child. However, this support can at times be too much. By doing too many things for the child, they do not encourage them to take an appropriate level of responsibility or to develop their own skills for independence. Staff work hard to keep the child calm and settled, but, in doing so, often avoid healthy challenge or opportunities for them to develop.

The child told inspectors that they do not get on with all staff. Managers have not identified this or explored with staff how they can better develop relationships with the child. Staff do not respond to the child in a sufficiently consistent manner and this contributes to the lack of confidence that the child has said they have in their relationships with some staff and in the support they receive. Despite this lack of confidence, the child is confident about articulating their views about their care. Increasingly, managers share this with other professionals such as the child's advocate and social worker. Managers encourage the child to participate in creating their plans.

The child has recently suffered a broken arm. Despite encouragement, the child was unable to keep the cast on their arm. The child's arm is now permanently damaged where the break did not heal properly. Staff do not support the child to consistently complete their physiotherapy exercises, and this risks permanently limiting the arm's mobility.

The child receives less than five hours of tuition a week. Although staff ensure tuition takes place in the home, they did not attend the most recent education meeting and so were unable to provide important feedback to ensure the education is tailored to the child's needs. The child has aspirations to start a college course in the future. However, there is no clear pathway to support the child to achieve their goals, or to understand whether these goals are realistic and attainable.

The child's bedroom is personalised and homely. There are photos that are important to the child on the walls, as well as their artwork. The child meets with an occupational

therapist and staff respond well to their suggestions for equipment. Recommended sensory items are available to the child in their room. The child has targets they have set themselves displayed on a wall in the hallway, highlighting their ambition. However, staff do not provide appropriate support to the child to ensure these are realistic and attainable. This means the chart, despite its positive intentions is not helpful.

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

The child says they do not feel safe living in this home. They say that they lack confidence in the ability of staff to keep them safe when they struggle with their emotions. Serious incidents occur in the home and community. At times, staff actions have contributed to these incidents, by not following the plans in place for the child. The lack of a predictable and stable routine means that the child finds it much more difficult to anticipate staff responses. Staff do not always recognise when they need to intervene to keep the child safe. This has resulted in risks escalating and police being called to the home. Too often, the child is then detained by police. Police have attended nine of the 18 significant incidents since the last inspection. Eight of the calls to police have been made by concerned members of the public. The child has been arrested on four occasions. Even with significant restrictions in place, staff have not been able to keep the child safe. Staff understand the regulations governing the use of restraint, but this does not translate into practice; when the child is in situations when they may be at risk of significant harm, staff do not intervene to keep them safe.

A series of significant incidents occurred over a period of three days. During this period, behaviour management techniques were not consistently applied. The level of risk escalated, leading to police involvement. The child sustained a serious injury while in police custody. The manager has made a formal complaint to the relevant police force. However, she did not respond to correspondence quickly enough to allow this investigation to start. Managers have not undertaken a review of the incidents to identify or understand action taken by staff. They have not identified when staff did not follow plans or intervene appropriately. This lack of learning impacts negatively on the ongoing care of the child and risks further reoccurrence of similar concerns.

Managers failed to plan for the child's deprivation of liberty safeguards ending. They also did not share this with the responsible individual in a timely way to allow for proper planning. As a result, the child did not receive support to improve their understanding of the reasons for the restrictions or reassure them of their safety. Restrictions were lifted at a time that the child was unable to make safe choices. Due to this poor planning, a further application was made to court and the restrictions are in place for longer than anticipated. A suitable step-down plan is now in place to reduce the restrictions, including strategies for when the child finds things more difficult. The responsible individual ensures conversations with the child take place to talk about this process.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Concerns about the management of the home were identified at the last inspection. This included concerns about the skill of staff to meet the child's needs, the quality of

management oversight following incidents, and the support provided to staff. Since then, the responsible individual has provided close support and oversight of the manager. However, the support plan has not led to change in the day to day running of the home.

Managers attend regular multi-agency meetings where the child's needs are explored. However, information from these meetings is not always incorporated into the child's plans. Managers do not use the meetings to drive planning or to challenge drift.

The child receives support from an increasingly stable staff team. Staff enjoy working with the child and spending time with them. However, staff do not receive regular reflective supervision to explore the significant incidents that occur and to understand how to support the child's complex needs. Staff receive a range of training, including in therapeutic practice and trauma, in line with the home's ethos. However, managers do not expand on this training and embed learning in the culture of the home.

Regular team meetings offer staff the chance to discuss practice, and the child is very present in these discussions, sometimes in person or other times in discussion. Despite these positive discussions, this has not translated into positive improvements in the quality and effectiveness of practice.

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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that responses to and management of incidents by staff are appropriate, and that staff follow plans designed to support them to care for children and keep them safe at all times. This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	28 June 2024

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; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(i)(ii)(h)) In particular, ensure that oversight of incidents and carers' practice is thorough and robust at all times. In addition, the registered person must ensure that following their robust review of staff's practice, reflective and constructive conversations are held with staff, aiming to improve practice and protect children. They should also ensure that important information shared by other professionals is incorporated into children's plans. They should ensure that staff are confident and able to deliver care in line with the statement of purpose. A requirement was made under regulation 13 at the previous inspection but the detail of the action to be taken has changed.	19 July 2024
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—	19 July 2024

understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(vi)(ix)) In particular, ensure staff understand and implement the home's ethos, in line with the training received. In addition, ensure the child has opportunities for developmentally appropriate independence. In addition, ensure the child has a positive daily routine, with planned time for activities out of the home in line with the home's statement of purpose.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff—	19 July 2024

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(v)(viii)(ix)(x)(b)) In particular, ensure that the manager understands the quality of relationships between the child and staff, and offers good-quality reflective supervision to support staff to reflect on their relationships with the child. The manager should ensure that support is in place to strengthen relationships when needed. In addition, ensure all staff are familiar with and have the confidence to follow the child's plans.	
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 children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to—	19 July 2024

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; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) In particular, ensure the child receives the support and encouragement needed to complete exercises related to their health, and that staff understand the importance of this.	
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)) In particular, ensure that staff participate in meetings about the child's education to ensure there are clear, achievable plans in place.	19 July 2024

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: 2694804

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SW Education & Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Node Cowork, Roundswell Enterprise Park, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 3YB

Responsible individual: Tina Taylor

Registered manager: Wendy Burgess

Inspectors

Clare Nixon, Social Care Inspector
Carla Simkiss, Social Care Inspector

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