

2695213

Registered provider: Liv Children Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to two children. The aim of the home is to support children who experience social and emotional difficulties due to their early childhood experiences.

The home was registered in October 2022. The post for a registered manager is currently vacant.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Not previously inspected

Inspection type**Inspection judgement**

Inspection judgements

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

There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection. This inspection identified some shortfalls in the help and protection of children and in the leadership and management of the home. This means that the home has been judged overall as requires improvement to be good.

Staff are caring and motivated. They say that they enjoy working together with other professionals to create a positive difference in children's lives. Staff speak warmly about the children in the home. Children are now well matched with due consideration given to the skills and experience of staff. The move into the home for the newest child has been well managed. The child was able to visit the home and meet the staff prior to them moving in. The child was able to contact staff to ask any questions via their chosen communication method of text messaging. This ensured that the child felt more comfortable and familiar with the staff team on arrival and settled quickly.

The children's relatives and professionals are impressed by the care and support being provided. They recognise the difference staff are making for the children. The children have made some progress from their starting points. For example, they have improved social confidence and are engaging in their online tuition. However, there is no evidence of there being a structured plan in place to provide learning and development opportunities outside of the children's formal education arrangements. Therefore, staff have missed opportunities to further encourage the children's learning and to help them to establish routines.

The staff are caring and have developed positive relationships with children. The staff spend time with the children doing the things they enjoy, such as playing football, table tennis and going on bicycle rides or to the gym. One child said that they feel settled in the home, they enjoy the activities provided and they have good relationships with most staff.

The children are proud of their house, which looks like every other house on the street and is well maintained and welcoming. They build appropriate friendships with their peers in the local area.

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

The provider has not ensured that staff recruitment practices are consistently strong. Staff recruitment files contain gaps in employment history for two members of staff that have not been identified and explored. One member of staff has been employed without a reference sought from their most recent employer. The lack of professional curiosity and failure to consistently carry out effective safer

recruitment checks could potentially lead to unsuitable applicants being employed to work with children.

When the provider has identified concerns about staff's practice, action has been taken to keep children safe and minimise further risk. The provider has followed the home's internal disciplinary processes to put in place clear boundaries for staff. However, there is no evidence that a referral was made to the local authority designated officer in one case and the Disclosure and Barring Service in another. This undermines the effectiveness of agencies to work together to keep children safe.

The provider stores fire extinguishers in a locked cupboard under the stairs. The staff know where the fire extinguishers are kept and carry keys to access these. However, this practice has not been risk assessed to identify and reduce risk.

There are only three members of staff who have a valid first-aid qualification. Staff rotas indicate that there has not always been a member of staff who is first-aid qualified on every shift. This could lead to children not receiving appropriate care when needed urgently. The responsible individual shared plans that demonstrate that other members of staff are soon to receive first-aid training.

Behaviour management records are unclear and lack sufficient detail. On one occasion, records do not demonstrate why a child received a consequence. On another occasion, it is unclear how much money a child was asked to recompense the home as a consequence for financial misuse of house money. The records do not demonstrate suitable evaluation or analysis of the effectiveness of the consequences applied. On one occasion, the responsible individual completed and signed off the consequence record. Therefore, there was no independent oversight to ensure that consequences are applied appropriately and fairly. Records of consequences indicate an inconsistent approach to managing children's behaviour. This does not support children to develop positive behaviour.

Records consistently evidence that reflection on incidents translates into improved practice. For example, leaders informed the inspectors that they had spoken to staff at team meetings about thresholds for involving the police in incidents and the need to call a manager before calling the police. However, there are no records of these discussions and guidance for staff.

Staff recognise the importance of forming positive relationships with children. Children are regularly consulted by staff and can share their thoughts, wishes and feelings. This allows children to feel involved in decision-making in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The previous registered manager left the home two weeks before this inspection. The responsible individual is currently providing management oversight of the home with the support of the deputy manager. Leaders' and managers' oversight

of the home has not been sufficiently strong. Consequently, several shortfalls were identified during this inspection.

Staff training is not always completed within the necessary time frame. One member of staff, who has worked in children's homes for more than two years, does not hold the required Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare and is yet to enrol. Leaders were unaware that this was not within the agreed time frame. As a result, staff are missing out on valuable training opportunities that could support them in their work with vulnerable children.

The provider has not notified the local authority, in which the home is situated, when children have moved in and out of the home. The responsible individual was unaware that this is required.

There is not a clear and consistently implemented approach to effective record-keeping. Records of behaviour management, children's case files and significant incidents require improvement. Some records are not dated and signed, and records do not always demonstrate that actions stated as being required have been addressed. Children's files were missing important documents, such as consent for medication, delegated authority, placement plan and pathway plan. Some of these documents were later located in archived paper files or emails. This means that important information in respect of the child is not readily accessible to staff.

While several shortfalls have been identified as part of this inspection, there are no serious or widespread concerns. The responsible individual is seeking a new suitable manager and has recently taken a more active role in the day-to-day running of the home. There are several areas for improvement. However, the children's experiences of living at the home are positive. They feel listened to and fully involved in their home.

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, 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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d)) In particular, ensure that gaps in employment history are identified and explored and that references from applicants' current or most recent employer are sought.	30 June 2023
The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(a))	30 June 2023
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is—	31 August 2023

in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that all staff obtain a suitable level 3 qualification within the specified time frame.	
The registered person must notify, without delay, the local authority for the area in which the children's home is located of every admission of a child into the home and every discharge of a child from the home. (Regulation 41 (1))	30 June 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(h))	31 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislation, such as alarms and food hygiene. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a more structured approach to support children's learning and development outside of the children's formal

education arrangements. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: 2695213

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Liv Children Care Limited

Registered provider address: 128 City Road, London EC1V 2NX

Responsible individual: Ravjot Bajwa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Joanna Heller, Social Care Inspection Manager (lead)
Sasha Reid, Social Care Inspector

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