

# 2703604

Registered provider: The Forge Nuneaton Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider and is registered to provide care for up to six children who have had adverse childhood experiences.

The home is one of four homes on the same site. Each is individually registered with Ofsted. The home is part of a community that embraces the sanctuary model of therapeutic care.

A registered manager has been in post since February 2023, when the home opened. She has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management.

### Inspection dates: 15 and 16 August 2023

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>inadequate</b> |
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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 and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**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: inadequate**

Leadership and management and safeguarding arrangements in the home are inadequate. This has had a negative impact on the overall experiences and progress of children.

At the time of the inspection, two children lived in the home.

Significant shortfalls in care planning and decision-making regarding this mean that children move into and on from the home quickly. Since the home was registered on 23 February 2023, six children have moved in and four have moved on. Notice has been served on the two remaining children living in the home, and they are due to move on soon. Children are not afforded the opportunity to settle and to be cared for by staff, and they do not experience stability. This negatively impacts on their experience, progress and well-being.

Children report that they do not trust all the staff. Records show that the manager has relied heavily on agency staff. This negatively impacts on children's ability to form positive relationships due to the lack of continuity of care. Positively, the two children living at the home now get on well with each other and enjoy spending time together.

The provider has a 'Community Charter', which has had input from children across all four of their other homes. However, children at this home want to change the charter and make it more individual to them and their home. They have raised this with the manager, but to date, no action has been taken. Consequently, it is not always clear that children receive an individual approach to some aspects of their care and that their wishes are listened to and considered.

Children have access to a team of therapists and are helped to attend therapy sessions. However, it is difficult to ascertain the impact this has because children's placements are short-lived. Therapists are unable to implement effective life-story work in line with the home's therapeutic model.

While some areas of the home environment are homely and welcoming, this standard is not consistent throughout. A cupboard containing children's personal items and a storage room containing games and activity resources are kept locked. Children are reliant on staff for access to these rooms, and this limits their freedom of choice.

Despite the shortfalls, children have made some progress since arriving at the home. Children have engaged with their educational provision and are making progress. For example, one child is now ready to sit his GCSE in mathematics, which is a significant achievement from his starting point.

Both children were on holiday during the inspection. Inspectors spoke with the children on the telephone to gain their views. Children have access to a range of enjoyable activities outside the home, for example going boxing and attending the gym. These activities help children to remain fit and well while having fun.

Children are helped by staff to spend time with their families. Because of this good support, children's relationships with their families improve.

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

Staff have failed to keep children safe. For example, a child went missing from home without staff knowing during the night. A family member notified staff that the child had arrived at their home early in the morning. Staff were unaware that the child was not asleep in their room. This lack of vigilance by staff placed the child at risk of harm.

When children go missing from home, staff do not follow the guidance set out in their written plans. For example, they do not continue to search for children to try to locate them and return them to the home safely, and on one occasion, there was a delay in reporting a child missing to the police. These shortfalls show that staff do not understand and carry out their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe.

Some health and safety matters are not followed up promptly. For example, recommendations for priority action raised in a fire risk assessment remain outstanding. Ofsted made a referral to the fire service during the inspection.

Staff can confuse children in terms of the boundaries they set. For example, one child, on his first day at the home, was taken to another house in the community to play. Later in the day, the child returned from an activity and went to the other home again. However, on this occasion, staff told the child not to go there. Inconsistent messages do not help children to know what is expected of them.

Children are rewarded for positive behaviour. However, when staff implement negative consequences, these are not always recorded. This does not help the manager to understand what consequences are given to children and whether these are proportionate and effective.

Allegations made by children that were reviewed during the inspection have been investigated appropriately and referred to the relevant professionals. Immediately after the inspection, additional concerns were raised with Ofsted in regard to allegations against staff. These were not made known to inspectors during the inspection, and this lack of transparency is a concern. Managers subsequently took action to liaise with the local authority designated officer, and investigations are ongoing.

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

Ineffective monitoring by managers means that shortfalls in care are not identified and acted on. There has been a lack of reflection regarding care-planning decisions to understand why children's placements at the home have ended sooner than anticipated. This does not give confidence that managers understand the impact that their decision-making has on children's experiences and welfare.

Staff do not undertake training in key areas to understand and meet children's individual needs effectively. For example, no staff have had training in internet safety or bereavement. In addition, not all staff have received training in how to manage missing-from-home risks and incidents.

The manager has used a high level of non-permanent staff. This affects the continuity of care that children receive and impacts on their ability to form positive and lasting relationships with adults who care for them.

Non-permanent staff do not receive supervision from the manager. Despite the manager using high levels of agency staff over a long period of time, the manager has failed to provide them with opportunities to discuss their practice and development.

On two occasions, the manager did not inform Ofsted of serious incidents at the home when a child removed the window restrictors from his bedroom window and made a threat to jump. This lack of reporting does not enable the regulator to promptly review what has happened to determine whether the correct action was taken to protect the child.

The manager does not ensure that staff rosters include the staff's full names or hours worked. This makes it difficult to understand who has worked in the home and when, and so this information cannot be relied upon should it be needed in the future.

Some children's daily records are incomplete or not recorded at all. This means children's case records do not accurately reflect their life journey, should they wish to view them now or in the future.

The manager has not ensured that the statement of purpose has been reviewed and updated within the required timescales. As a result, inspectors were not aware of the current staffing arrangements.

As a result of this inspection, Ofsted has issued a notice to restrict accommodation.

## 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          |
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| <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 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; and</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi))</p> | 24 September 2023 |
| <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>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 24 September 2023 |

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| <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; 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)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p> |                   |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 24 September 2023 |
| <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 24 September 2023 |
| <p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 24 September 2023 |
| <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; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 24 September 2023 |

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| <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> |  |
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## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children and is a homely, domestic environment. In particular, ensure that cupboards in the home are not locked unnecessarily. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted about their views on the home's care to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that non-permanent staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

## 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:** 2703604

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

**Registered provider:** The Forge Nuneaton Limited

**Registered provider address:** The Forge Nuneaton Limited

**Responsible individual:** David Hughes

**Registered manager:** Kim O'Neill

## Inspectors

Michelle Spruce, Social Care Inspector

Mark Dickinson, Social Care Inspector



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