

2724379

Registered provider: Invigor Adolescent Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home and registered to provide care for up to four children who may be experiencing social and/or emotional issues.

At the time of inspection, there were two children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 5 July 2023, which is when the home opened.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 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 applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

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

Children are beginning to build positive relationships with staff. Children can identify members of staff who they can talk to about their worries. One child said, 'I wanted a pool table; I told [the manager] and he sorted it for me. I haven't had anything like that before.' Children feel listened to and understood.

Children's daily routines are improving. Children continue to spend a lot of time in their bedrooms. They do not have consistent times for meals, sleeping and activities. However, staff are working hard to try and disrupt unhelpful patterns and reward positive changes. Children's well-being is gradually getting better.

Children are engaging in both fun and educational activities. One child said, 'I never wanted to go before [on activities]. I didn't care what anyone said. I was happy doing what I do. But I like them [staff] here; I don't mind going out with them.' Children are being supported to have more positive life experiences with safe adults.

Children live in a modern, well-appointed home. Staff keep communal areas of the house clean and tidy. They ensure that the home is decorated for celebrations, such as Halloween. However, children's rooms are not always kept to a good enough standard of cleanliness. Additionally, staff have not yet added personal touches to the home, to reflect the personalities and interests of the children living there.

Staff understand and try to promote children's mental and physical health needs. Staff regularly use valuable input from a therapeutic agency to inform the way they support children's mental health and well-being. Staff also try to find ways to encourage children to attend essential healthcare appointments. This is not always successful. Children have missed important appointments regarding their physical health.

Children's experience of education is varied. Staff have supported one child into education after a lengthy gap. However, another child does not have an education plan and is out of education and training. Staff have not challenged the local authority about this unacceptable delay. Staff also do not make sure that they have access to the most up-to-date assessments and documents regarding children's education. Children's academic progress is limited.

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

Staff receive comprehensive safeguarding training as part of their induction. Staff understand their safeguarding duties and are becoming more confident in keeping children safe.

The response from staff when children go missing has been inconsistent. For example, staff have failed to go out to look for children. They have not followed up on important information when children return to the home. Staff have not always updated children's records with a full account of their actions. The manager reviewed these situations at a team meeting. This has supported staff in learning from mistakes. Staff have also undertaken further training. More recent responses to missing episodes have been in line with the procedure.

Children do not yet receive a consistent approach to rules and boundaries. Staff regularly celebrate children's positive behaviour. They use rewards that are meaningful to the individual child. The home has a house policy of consequences for staff to use when children break the rules. However, staff practice is not consistent. For example, staff have allowed a child to use an electronic cigarette in the house. This inconsistent approach does not help children to learn more socially acceptable behaviour.

Staff have regular conversations with children about their risks and vulnerabilities. However, staff often have these conversations in reaction to children's behaviours. They do not use an initiative-taking approach to helping children. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of how to make safer choices.

There has been one serious allegation about the quality of care a child has been receiving. The response from leaders and managers was poor. They failed to follow the home's procedures for the management of allegations. This leaves children and staff vulnerable.

Managers have failed to send notifications of serious incidents to the regulator. One notification was delayed. Notifications do not always contain all relevant information. This limits the effectiveness of external oversight of the home.

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

There is a suitably qualified and experienced manager leading this home. As this is a newly registered home, the manager is still getting to know the staff and children. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of his team but has yet to devise a clear plan to address the identified issues.

The staff team is new, with varying levels of experience. There have been occasions where inexperienced members of staff have been working in the home without the support of more experienced colleagues. Additionally, at times there have not been enough members of staff in the home to meet the children's needs. There is potential for children to receive inconsistent levels of care.

Staff feel supported by leaders and managers. Staff receive regular supervision, which is child-focused and helpful. One member of staff reported that their manager 'always has time for me'. However, leaders and managers do not always deal with

issues relating to staff performance quickly. This delays essential improvements to the quality-of-care children receive.

Team meetings take place regularly and are used as a helpful forum to share information about good practice and about children's needs.

There is a clear complaints procedure for children and others to follow. When complaints are received, leaders and managers investigate thoroughly and provide feedback to those involved. Complaints are resolved quickly.

Leaders and managers have systems in place to monitor and review the care children receive. Currently, these systems are not being used effectively in order to identify mistakes and inaccuracies in children's records or shortfalls in staff practice. As a result, children are not fulfilling their potential.

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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	31 December 2023

In particular, the registered person must make sure that staff understand and follow children's missing-from-care protocols. Children's records in relation to missing-from-care incidents must contain enough detailed information about steps taken by members of staff, so as to be helpful to the child. Additionally, the registered person must make sure that staff follow up on any potential risk indicators to ensure that all risk assessments are accurate. Also, the registered person must ensure that staff understand and consistently follow the home's policy in relation to smoking and vaping. In addition, the registered person must make sure that any allegations of abuse or harm are taken seriously and are reported to the local authority designated officer and the regulator, as per the home's policy and procedure.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter;	31 December 2023

the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that notifications are sent in accordance with the regulation, regardless of the assumed outcome of any investigation or enquiry. The registered person must send notifications in a timely manner and must ensure that there are processes in place so that notifications of serious events are sent in their absence. Also, the registered person must ensure that notifications contain all important details, particularly in relation to allegations.	
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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;	30 January 2023

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—

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)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))

In particular, the registered person must make sure that they implement and effectively use systems of oversight which help them to identify and address shortfall in practice and issues in children's records.

Also, the registered person must make sure that there are enough staff working at the home to provide children with good quality, safe care.

The registered person must make sure key work sessions are properly planned and carried out with a clear aim that is helpful to the child and a measurable outcome. Records of key-work sessions should be thoroughly recorded to demonstrate that children are being supported to understand their own risks and gain the skills they need to be able to keep themselves safe.

The registered person must ensure that any issues relating to staff performance are quickly and adequately addressed.

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;

30 January 2023

support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;

understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;

promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;

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;

raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority;

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;

help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment;

help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and

that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning.
(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))

Specifically, the registered person must make sure that each child has a plan about how they will be supported to engage with education, employment or training.

In particular, the registered person must also make sure that all important documents in relation to children's education are received in a timely manner and are up to date.

The registered person must ensure that other professionals who are supporting children's education are appropriately challenged when their performance or response is inadequate in relation to their role. The registered person must make sure that such concerns are appropriately escalated when necessary.

Recommendations

- The registered person should make sure that the home is a homely, domestic environment. Communal areas of the home should be personalised to reflect the children living there. Also, staff should maintain oversight of the children's bedrooms, stepping in when necessary, to ensure that they are always kept adequately clean. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child's day to day health and well-being needs are met. In particular, the registered person should make sure that staff are helping children to attend all necessary health appointments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

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: 2724379

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Invigor Adolescent Care Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Warren Bruce Road, Trafford Park, Manchester
M17 1LB

Responsible individual: Barry Cotterill

Registered manager: Anjum Khan

Inspector

Nicola Shaw, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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