

2724911

Registered provider: AP Care Homes Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The home provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted on 27 June 2023. There has been no registered manager in post since 13 September 2023.

There were no children living at the home at the time of this monitoring visit.

Inspection date: 7 October 2024

This monitoring visit

The home was judged inadequate at the full inspection in November 2023. Ofsted found that children had suffered harm due to serious and widespread safeguarding failures.

Since the home was judged inadequate, five monitoring visits have been carried out. The provider has failed to make and sustain the necessary improvements or act in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Ofsted inspectors could not gain access to the property at the previous monitoring visit on 1 October 2024. Despite repeated telephone calls and an email to the director, no response was received until late into the evening.

There has been no registered manager in post since 13 September 2023. Since the last monitoring visit, there have been further changes to the management team. The acting manager left the organisation with immediate effect on the evening of 30 September 2024. The new proposed responsible individual, who started work at the home on 6 June 2024, left the organisation on 27 September 2024.

At this visit, the director reported that she has appointed a new person to take on the role of responsible individual and a new acting manager. The acting manager and proposed responsible individual were present for this visit. The director confirmed that safer recruitment checks were still to be carried out for both individuals. This included some references, work histories and full Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Since the home has been in operation, there have been six responsible individuals, one registered manager and five proposed managers. This continues to demonstrate instability in the leadership and management arrangements.

Staff told inspectors that they were in the home on 1 October 2024 when the inspectors could not gain access to carry out the monitoring visit. They said that a decision was made by the director to refuse entry. This demonstrates that the provider does not understand their role in working with the regulator and Ofsted's powers of entry to inspect.

There have been further changes to the staff team in the home. Two recently recruited staff have left the organisation and one new staff member remains. This staff member is the only person currently safely recruited. The workforce remains unstable and there are insufficient staff to safely care for and support children. The director confirmed that a recruitment campaign is ongoing.

The requirements raised at the last inspection were not considered at this visit. A further requirement has been issued in relation to safer recruitment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2023	Full	Inadequate

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 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 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; 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; 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)(f)(h)) This requirement is restated. Specifically, leaders and managers must have effective oversight of the quality of care provided to children so that they can identify and address areas of concern. This includes oversight of staff practice, children's records and staff training and records.	25 November 2024

The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b) (5))	25 November 2024
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 an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and 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)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	25 November 2024
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—	25 November 2024

how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and

the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.

The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.

The registered person must ensure that—

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—

the name of the child;

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;

the date, time and location of the use of the measure;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

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")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This requirement is restated. Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that records of restraint are completed in line with regulation, that these are reviewed and that any concerns about restraint practice or injuries sustained are identified and responded to swiftly.	
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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)) This requirement is restated. Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that children’s risks are clearly assessed. Also, they should ensure that staff are provided with clear guidance and strategies to support them to reduce risks. Leaders and managers must ensure that staff take effective action to keep children safe. This includes ensuring that	25 November 2024

allegations made by children are promptly reported to relevant agencies to safeguard children.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)) This requirement is restated. Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that children have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. They must ensure that they scrutinise available information before a child moves in so that they effectively consider whether they can meet children's needs. Further to this, the registered provider must ensure that the home's care plans reflect the information and outcomes from the child's relevant plans and inform good care practices in the home.	25 November 2024
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—	25 November 2024

that staff—

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

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.

(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ix)(x))

This requirement is restated.

Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that children's emotional and behavioural needs are understood and are met, in line with children's relevant plans.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2724911

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: AP Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 307 Hale Road, Hale Barns, Altrincham WA15 8SS

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Catherine Fargin, Regulatory Inspection Manager

Michelle Edge, Senior His Majesty's Inspector (Quality assurance visit)

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