

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 July 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: 9 July 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, four monitoring visits have been conducted. The provider has failed to make and sustain the necessary improvements or act in accordance with the relevant regulations. A restriction notice was served following a monitoring visit on 30 January 2024.

Further visits have been undertaken to monitor this restriction. During these visits, inspectors identified ongoing weaknesses relating to safeguarding practices and a continued lack of stability and effectiveness in the leadership team.

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken by the provider since the restriction notice was issued.

Since the last monitoring visit, the responsible individual and three further staff have left the organisation. There has been no registered manager in post since 13

September 2023. This ongoing instability in respect of leadership and management of the home does not provide assurance that children's safety and welfare will be promoted.

The interim manager has applied to Ofsted to register, and three new staff have been recruited. The frequent changes in leadership, management and staffing in the home undermine stability and consistency.

A new person has been appointed to take on the role of responsible individual. He has been in post since 6 June 2024. His company had previously completed an audit of this home, so he understood the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Ofsted has not been able to assess his suitability for the role of responsible individual in this setting. However, since he started with the company, he has taken action to implement new processes and reviewed and updated documentation.

Safer recruitment processes have been reviewed with new strengthened procedures in place. This has improved the quality and oversight of the recruitment process. All new staff have been safely recruited.

A new recording system has been introduced to monitor care practices in the home. The responsible individual has shared examples of how the forms should be used to develop the skills of the managers and staff team.

Despite the introduction of new documentation, processes and monitoring and review systems, the interim manager has failed to use these effectively to demonstrate how they will embed improvements into care practices. Opportunities to understand the knowledge that staff have gained following training sessions has not been thoroughly explored by the interim manager and outstanding actions from supervision have not been followed up. This does not assure Ofsted that the home has suitable management arrangements.

New staff have attended training in team teach, safeguarding, care planning and risk management. Staff talk positively about the training they have received.

New staff have received supervision. Staff report that they have found these sessions useful in understanding the expectations of their roles.

Other requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection were not considered at this visit and are carried forward to the next inspection.

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 with 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.	16 September 2024

This includes oversight of staff practice, records for children and training and records for staff.	
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))	16 September 2024
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— 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;	16 September 2024

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 restraints are completed in line with regulation, ensuring that these are reviewed and that any concerns with 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—	16 September 2024

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 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.	16 September 2024

(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 the information available prior to a child moving in so that they effectively consider whether they can meet children's needs. Further to this, the registered provider must ensure that home care plans reflect the information and outcomes from the child's relevant plans and that this informs good care practices in the home.	
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— 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.	16 September 2024

Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that children's emotional and behavioural needs are understood and these are met, in line with the child's relevant plans.	
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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, Social Care Inspector

Michelle Edge, Senior His Majesty's Inspector (QAV)

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