

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: 13 December 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, seven 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.

There has been no registered manager in post since 13 September 2023. At the previous monitoring visit, the director reported that she had appointed a new manager. Since the home has been in operation, there have been seven responsible individuals in total and seven managers. Only one of these managers has been registered with Ofsted. This continues to demonstrate ongoing instability in the leadership and management of the home. This does not provide children with a stable and safe environment.

A new proposed responsible individual was appointed on 7 October 2024. Despite this visit being announced, the new proposed responsible individual and the director

were not present at this monitoring visit. This limited the provider's ability to demonstrate the work they have undertaken since the last visit.

Since the last monitoring visit, a further manager has been appointed. During this monitoring visit, the new manager told inspectors that her start date was 6 December 2024. At the time of this monitoring visit, she had been in post for five working days.

The new manager stated that she has identified several documents, processes and systems that require further review. These include updating templates for children's risk assessments, reviewing behaviour support plans and implementing a new process for staff to follow if there are any incidents of physical intervention. However, the manager said that she has not had the time, due to the limited time in post, to make the necessary changes or an opportunity to develop a new staff team in its understanding of the actions that they must take to keep children safe.

Since the last monitoring visit, there have been further changes to the staff team. Only one staff member who was in post at the time of the last monitoring visit remains in post. This member of staff informed inspectors that they had been promoted to deputy manager. This is also recorded in the home's statement of purpose. However, the new manager said that this was a temporary career development opportunity, as interviews were planned for a new deputy manager.

Recruitment has been ongoing at the home. The new manager and staff said that the director has led on the recruitment of staff alongside the HR manager who is also the personal assistant to Ms Pickston, the director. This was evident in the documentation provided.

Two new members of staff have been recently recruited. They have not undertaken all the necessary training to support them in their roles; at the time of the monitoring visit, they had only been in post for a few days. Furthermore, one staff member, who has worked in the home for six months, records showed that some training remained outstanding. The new manager said, 'Recruitment is ongoing. I want to be sure that the staff recruited have the skills and knowledge to keep children safe.'

During this visit, staff confirmed that they had received an induction into the home from the director. The new manager reported that she had completed her own induction booklet at the request of the director. The manager acknowledged that the records do not demonstrate that she had been provided with a sufficient induction. It did not provide a full understanding of the operation of the home, the expectations of her role, or the improvements required to ensure that the home will operate in line with the regulations.

Although staff report they had received supervision, records were unclear and did not demonstrate that all staff had receive supervision in line with the company's own

policies. The manager acknowledge that improvements were still required to ensure that records were accurate in the home.

The HR manager stated that she has had responsibility for ensuring that the recruitment process is followed for each staff member. This has improved the recruitment processes in place for the staff currently employed.

Requirements and recommendations were not considered at this visit and are carried forward to the next inspection. A further restriction notice was issued as Ofsted was unable to determine the capacity of the provider to make the required changes and demonstrate the actions that they will take to keep children safe. Furthermore, it was unclear about how the provider would stabilise the leadership and management arrangements at the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

16/11/2023

Inspection type

Full

Inspection judgement

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. This includes oversight of staff practice, children's records and staff training and records.	27 January 2025

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)) This requirement is restated.	27 January 2025
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; a description of the measure and its duration;	27 January 2025

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	27 January 2025

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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)) This requirement is restated.	27 January 2025

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.	
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. 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.	27 January 2025

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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked-after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024