

2733224

Registered provider: Heart and Home Living Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

Two children are currently being cared for in this home.

The registered manager has been absent from the home for several weeks. Recruitment for a new manager is underway.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 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 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: requires improvement to be good

Children's progress and experiences are not yet good. This is due to shortfalls in the protection of children and the leadership and management of the home.

The admissions process does not ensure that staff fully understand children's needs and experiences before they move into the home. Leaders do not raise concerns about increasing incidents in a timely way with external professional agencies. This means that children do not receive a timely response from these agencies or care that is planned effectively. This hampers children's progress following their arrival at the home.

Staff's response to children is not always in line with the provider's preferred method of care. Occasionally, the actions of staff appear to be a contributory factor for escalating behaviour. For example, staff have taken a personal item away from a child who has not followed the house rules that are new to them, without exploring other options to explain and resolve the situation.

Arrangements for information-sharing with family members about children's care are not always clear. For example, staff do not know whose responsibility it is to update family members about children's progress. All contact is through social workers. This can hamper efforts to enable children to remain in contact with the people who are close to them.

When children are not attending school, staff are proactive in ensuring that they are given the opportunity to take part in academic and physical activities, such as swimming with a qualified coach and educational activities in the home. This provides children with stimulation, learning and social interaction.

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

Safer recruitment practices for new members of staff have not always been followed. Gaps in recruitment checks mean that full and satisfactory information has, at times, not been obtained. This means that the provider cannot be assured of staff's suitability to work with children. This has the potential to leave children vulnerable.

Medication is stored safely. However, systems to safely record the administration of medication are not yet strong. Medication administration records contain inconsistencies which have not been followed up. Staff also use an electronic recording system which is confusing and does not clearly reflect how much medication is in stock. This means that medication processes are not yet fully secure.

When staff have physically held children, records are not always thorough. Analysis of incidents and follow-up actions are not always completed. Several incident reports that were reviewed contain reference to staff using physical intervention. However, the manager's review or debrief with the child are not carried out. This means that children are not always given the opportunity to understand why they have been held, and the opportunity to learn valuable lessons from these incidents is missed.

Staff do not always act in accordance with children's individual risk assessments. Additionally, staff are inconsistent in implementing behavioural boundaries. For example, staff used a vape to get a child to conform to what staff had asked of them. This area requires further improvement to be good and support children to develop good behaviours to help their development.

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

The registered manager has been absent from the home for several weeks. The staff team is relatively new, with only three members of staff, including the deputy manager, with experience of working in children's homes. The lack of guidance from a registered manager, and uncertainty about leadership plans, has affected staff's ability to safely support children and help them to make progress.

The provider has not always notified Ofsted when there have been serious incidents. This restricts the regulator's ability to monitor how well children are safeguarded at the time of the concerns or to take any regulatory action.

Team meetings take place regularly. Staff discuss children's individual needs and consider what support they themselves require to carry out their roles. Staff supervision sessions cover personal and work issues and address staff dynamics and practice matters. Staff can be open during supervision about any matters affecting their work.

Leaders are keen to use learning from care practice and feedback provided by external professional agencies to improve the experiences and care of children. Plans are in place to address the shortfalls identified. However, systems and processes to drive improvement are not yet embedded into day-to-day care practice.

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, 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— promotes children's 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; 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)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) The registered person must ensure that children's records are reviewed and monitored and that clear actions are identified and acted on. In addition, the registered person must ensure that staff are led and supported effectively to help children to make progress. The registered person must ensure that systems and processes are in place to monitor and improve the service.	22 December 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only—	22 December 2023

employ an individual to work at the children's home. The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; 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) (3)(a)(d)) The registered person must ensure that staff are recruited safely and all necessary information is obtained before staff work unsupervised with children.	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c)) The registered person must ensure that systems and processes are in place to manage the safe administration of medication.	22 December 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	22 December 2023

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: 2733224

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Heart and Home Living Limited

Registered provider address: Highbank, Greenbank Crescent, London NW4 2LA

Responsible individual: Tanya Humphries

Registered manager: Luke Tripkovic

Inspector

Helen Walters, Social Care Inspector

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