

2737107

Registered provider: Young Options Group Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides medium- and long-term care for up to two children aged between 11 and 18 years who have complex needs and are experiencing, or at risk of, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

At the time of this inspection, no children were living at the home.

The home and the manager registered with Ofsted on 4 September 2023.

This inspection was brought forward due to Ofsted receiving significant concerns and allegations in relation to the home. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate concerns and allegations of this kind, actions taken by the home in response to them were considered, alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection.

Inspection date: 21 September 2023

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious concerns in relation to the care and protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- At the time of the inspection, the serious concerns and allegations were subject to investigation by the appropriate external authorities.
- The concerns and allegations are so serious that the placing local authority of the children living in the home took the decision to immediately move them on from the home.
- Until the appropriate authorities have concluded their investigations, Ofsted cannot be assured that the individuals leading, managing or working in the home are suitable and safe to care for children.

During the inspection, the provider was issued with a notice suspending the registration of the home. This is due to the ongoing external investigations, further concerns that were identified at the inspection and to prevent risk of harm should any children be moved into the home. The suspension notice prevents the provider from moving any children into the home while it is in place.

The significant allegations and concerns relate to the conduct and integrity of staff, managers and senior leaders who work at the home and in the organisation.

Serious concerns regarding safer recruitment practices were found during the inspection. This includes information on suitability checks, for one member of staff, that questions their fitness to work with children. The responsible individual was unable to evidence if this information had been considered or appropriately risk assessed before or during the staff member's employment. For another staff member, their references were not accessible and could therefore not be reviewed. This is because they were identified as sensitive, and the responsible individual was unsuccessful in making them available to the inspector.

One child, who lived in the home for some time, made progress before moving on from the home. This includes the child being in and making progress in their education and building positive relationships with others. However, the serious concerns identified at this inspection undermine this progress.

Staff receive regular and supportive supervision. However, records relating to incidents that are known to have occurred demonstrate a significant lack of professionalism in respect of leaders and managers. The records also show that children were exposed to inappropriate behaviours by leaders, managers and staff that put them at risk of harm.

At the time of the inspection, several leaders, managers and staff were not actively working in the home because of the pending outcomes of the active external

investigations. Consequently, there is insufficient staff to operate the home in accordance with the statement of purpose.

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 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. 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 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	25 October 2023
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 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)(b))	25 October 2023

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2737107

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Young Options Group Limited

Registered provider address: Astra House, The Common, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 8RZ

Responsible individual: Lindsey Alexander

Registered manager: Joseph Laplana

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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