

2737729

Registered provider: Cannon Children Services Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private provider.

The home is registered to provide care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

One child was living at the home at the time of inspection.

There is a manager in post who is not yet registered.

Inspection date: 29 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 25 September 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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

Although there are some shortfalls in the care being provided to children, we did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. Since the last inspection, one child has left the home.

Relationships between staff and the child are good and the child is settled. This has helped the child to develop trusting relationships with staff, and they know that staff will care for them.

Children are supported to stay in touch with people who are important to them. The children are supported to have contact with their family and individuals who are close to them. For example, when children are unable to have face-to-face contact, staff ensure that contact is continued via online video calls. This ensures that relationships have improves.

Staff make referrals to external professionals to help children with their mental health. However, there was limited proactive or meaningful conversations with one child to support the child to talk to professionals or staff about their worries. Therefore, the child was not supported to understand their behaviours.

The child living in the home has not made any complaints. The registered individual was not able to locate the documents relating to an earlier complaint. While staff provided the child with opportunities to make a complaint, forms are kept in the staff office. Forms are not devised to support the children's age and understanding.

The manager has introduced additional plans to manage the child's risks. These plans are contradictory and do not always identify the level of risk or the strategies that staff should use to manage and reduce the child's individual risks. This does not help staff to understand the child's individual risks, vulnerabilities and needs to keep them safe.

For one child, daily room searches were required to manage a known risk. The manager's monthly audit recorded that room searches had been completed. During the inspection it was identified that there no records had been completed by staff to confirm that room searches had been carried out.

The manager has not implemented monitoring systems which are proactive in their use. This would assist the review of the quality of care provided to children. The manager is enthusiastic about providing children with the best possible care. She has reflected on the actions required to improve the service. For example, changes to procedures and the recording of information and has commenced the process to raise standards of care.

Leaders have not ensured that there is diversity within the staff team. On occasions, the provider does not always support the staff to share the same experiences as the children. As a result, children may not benefit from experiencing a homely environment with a culturally diverse team that act as positive role models.

The leadership of the home needs to be strengthened. The responsible individual has not ensured that the home's manager had information relating to the staff team. Concerns relating to staffs practice had not been recorded or shared. This could prevent staff from learning and improving their practice.

Leaders and managers understand safeguarding processes. However, they acknowledge that they are not yet confident when to report concerns to Ofsted. This could prevent the regulator from monitoring the care being provided and the safety of children.

Despite these shortfalls identified at this inspection, feedback from staff was positive. Staff morale is good, and staff feel well supported by the manager. Staff feel confident in the manager and are positive about their roles.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have not met the requirements and recommendation. Following this inspection, one additional requirement has been made.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/02/2024	Full	Good

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1) (a)(b)(c)) In particular, seek timely advice, treatment and support when children display a deterioration in their mental health or are engaging in behaviour that could cause them harm.	25 April 2025
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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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	25 April 2025

are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2) (a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e)) In particular, ensure that children have clear and detailed risk assessments that staff can understand and implement. Risk assessments should include known information. This also relates to the need for staff to follow advice around regular room searches.	
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; 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)(f)(h)) In particular, ensure there are robust quality assurance and monitoring systems in place that are used regularly, and recorded. This also refers to the need for there to be clear support and guidance for staff in the absence of a registered	25 April 2025

manager and for the manager to ensure there are appropriately qualified and experienced staff working at the home at all times.	
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 each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)) In particular, ensure that there are clear systems in place so that the suitability of children coming to live at the home is carefully considered, and that all children have a plan that staff can work to so that children are helped, protected, and their welfare is promoted at all times.	25 April 2025
If the registered provider is an organisation, the organisation must ensure that the responsible individual undertakes such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the responsible individual has the skills needed for supervising the management of the home. (Regulation 29(2)) In particular, ensure that the responsible individual has the skills and understanding to quality assure and oversee the home, particularly when there is no registered manager.	25 April 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or	25 April 2025

concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii) (e)) In particular, ensure that all relevant incidents are reported to Ofsted without delay.	
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39(1)(3)(5)) In particular, ensure that there is a clear system for investigating, recording and responding to complaints and allegations made by children.	25 April 2025
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; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;	25 April 2025

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)(v)(x))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to their behaviour. Homes must also meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2737729

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cannon Children Services Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Calais Hill, Tyler Hill, Canterbury CT2 9LT

Responsible individual: Dauty Ndhlovu

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Corline Parker, Social Care Inspector

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