

2739888

Registered provider: Safe Support Ventures Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered in August 2023. There has been no registered manager since December 2023. A manager has been appointed but is yet to submit a complete application to Ofsted to register. This is the home's first inspection.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

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	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 experiences have been adversely affected by shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home. Children have not benefited from consistent high-quality care, which impacts on the progress some children make.

Children do not always experience well-planned care. Incomplete assessments before one child moved into the home compromised staff's ability to care for the child. This resulted in them leaving the home quickly after moving in. There are currently plans for siblings to be placed together, despite this not being supported by their care plans. Leaders and managers were not aware of important information in the children's plans. They were unable to clarify that further assessment had been carried out to ensure that the plan for the children to live together is appropriate. This lack of oversight could impact on the sibling relationship and the outcomes achieved for both children.

Although one child receives home tuition, they have been out of school for a substantial period of time. Staff and the manager have not acted swiftly or effectively to advocate for the child. Concerns have not been escalated quickly enough to the most appropriate person to secure a new school for the child.

When children do not attend education, they sometimes spend prolonged periods in their bedrooms. Staff do not provide children with enough structure or routine during the school day and children often get up late in the morning. This does not support children to feel motivated to achieve and progress.

There have been no recorded incidents of bullying between children in the home. Children say they have formed positive relationships with staff.

Children enjoy various activities, including meals with staff, going to the cinema, clothes shopping and having personal care treatments. The manager encourages staff to capture these events by taking photos for the children to have as keepsakes. Children interact positively with staff and say they like cooking with staff and talking to them.

Children know how to make a complaint. Their views are respected and complaints are managed swiftly. For example, one child complained that a parcel addressed to them was opened by staff. The child was told staff opened the parcel due to concerns about its contents. Staff took care to explain why and when they might need to take this type of action. The child's concerns were handled sensitively. This helps children to build trusting relationships with staff, leaders and managers.

The home is maintained to a good standard. Repairs and wear and tear are dealt with swiftly. Children are able to personalise their bedrooms. For example, they choose their own furniture and have family photos and decorations on the walls.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff are aware of the processes to follow to report children missing from the home to the appropriate authorities. Staff work well with safeguarding partners to find children and support their safe return home. Records of missing-from-home incidents are reviewed thoroughly to identify any lessons that can be learned.

Discussions with children focus on their individual needs and are in line with their plans. Staff use information about children to plan effectively on a day-to-day basis. This helps children to receive appropriate help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings.

The recruitment process is thorough and safe. For example, leaders and managers obtain explanations about gaps in employment and carry out overseas checks. This makes sure that only adults who are safe to work with children are employed in the home.

Children are supported to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Families visit the home and enjoy spending time with their child. Leaders and managers have made the home accessible for those with a disability. Promoting family time helps children to reduce their anxieties and to settle.

Staff know and understand risk and vulnerabilities for the children currently living in the home. There are suitable strategies in place to reduce risk. However, previously, when assessments have identified that room searches were necessary to safeguard some children from self-harm, staff did not follow this guidance and the manager did not intervene as required.

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

The registered manager post is vacant. Directors were informed that the previous manager would be leaving in December, however, they did not inform the responsible individual, who understood the manager was on leave and would be returning to work. The lack of clear communication at senior level hampers oversight and quality of planning.

Leaders and managers' internal monitoring systems have not always been effective in identifying and correcting weaknesses. This includes the lack of timely escalation to the local authority responsible for securing a school for a child who has been without a school placement for a year. While the home has made tutoring arrangements, these are not a suitable substitute for school placement. Potential grievances from a member of staff were not managed effectively and significant

performance concerns about a member of staff were not shared with a prospective employer.

Since the home was registered in August 2023, several staff, as well as the previous registered manager, have left. This undermines continuity of care for children. A new manager has been appointed and staff say that they now feel better supported.

Staff benefit from an informative induction and receive regular supervision. Staff can access a wide range of training to increase their skills and knowledge. A behaviour analyst works alongside staff and the manager to provide researched informed practice on trauma informed care.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;	14 March 2024

help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(viii)(x)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that prompt action is taken to secure a school placement for children by escalating concerns to the most appropriate professionals, such as the virtual school headteacher and the independent reviewing officer.	
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 the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(e)(f)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that effective systems to monitor staff practice are in place.	14 March 2024
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—	14 March 2024

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 arrangements are in place to—

plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii))

In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that sufficient information is received about children moving into the home to help guard against unplanned endings and to ensure that placement in the home is consistent with children's care plans.

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: 2739888

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Safe Support Ventures Limited

Registered provider address: 31 Eresby Place, London NW6 4JT

Responsible individual: James Borland

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Melvin Davies, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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