

2759542

Registered provider: Accord Care Homes 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 with social and emotional needs. Three children are currently being cared for in this home.

This is the first inspection since the home was registered on 13 May 2024. There has been no registered manager since 11 July 2024.

Inspection dates: 31 July and 1 August 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	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 have positive experiences moving into the home. The managers and leaders ensure that the children can visit the home and meet with staff before they move in. Staff provide children with personalised guides to the home to help them be prepared for living in the home, and they welcome them warmly when they arrive.

Managers speak with relevant professionals to ensure they are aware of the needs of children before they move in. However, staff do not have the skills or experience to meet the needs of one child who recently moved into the home.

Staff encourage children to have positive routines and they plan structured activities. Staff ask children how they like to spend their time and include their views in their plans. Children feel listened to and valued. Children engage in their preferred activities and have enjoyable experiences.

Staff do not implement consistent boundaries in the home. This impacts the relationships between children and some staff, as well as the relationships between members of staff. Some staff implement consequences inappropriately. Children are unclear of the expectations of them in the home, which affects their feelings of stability and security.

The home is maintained to a high standard. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms according to their tastes and personalities. They help children keep their bedrooms clean and tidy, to make them relaxing places to be. Children have a sense of ownership and are comfortable in their home.

Not all children have an appropriate school place. However, staff liaise promptly with education professionals to ensure that suitable plans are in place for all children. One child was reintegrated back into their school a few days after moving into the home. Staff also support older children to obtain work experience and part-time jobs. Staff work hard to ensure children are prepared for their futures.

Staff have positive relationships with children's families and the people who are important to them. They support children to maintain their links with family members through phone calls and visits. Staff seek the views of children around their cultures and preferences. Staff understand and support children's identities, particularly where these are complex.

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

Children do not regularly go missing from home. For one child, missing-from-home episodes have reduced considerably since moving into the home. However, staff do not

consistently follow children's missing-from-home protocols. Staff do not search for the child to locate them. On occasion, there has been a delay in reporting a child as missing from the home. Staff have always collected the child swiftly when contacted and welcomed them back to the home.

Children do not make complaints about the home but know how to make a complaint if they need to. When a complaint was received from a neighbour, the responsible individual responded promptly. They then attended a community meeting to ensure that children were viewed positively in the neighbourhood. The responsible individual works hard to ensure that children are supported to integrate in their local community.

Some children are at risk of exploitation. Staff undertake training to ensure they have the skills to support them. Children have specialist professionals allocated to work with them to reduce risks. Staff support children to build relationships and engage with their specialist professionals.

Children are rarely held by staff. However, there has been a recent increase in holds for one child. Staff are trained to hold children safely. When staff have held children, this was proportionate to the risk faced and necessary for the safety of the child. However, the records do not clearly state the duration of the hold, who the author of the record is, when managers had oversight, or when managers spoke to staff and children following the incident.

One member of staff did not accurately record or pass on safeguarding information about a child to managers or involved professionals. The managers and leaders responded swiftly to rectify this, once they became aware of the information. However, this resulted in a delay in safeguarding information being available to the professionals responsible for the safety of the child.

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

Management of the home has been unstable. The previous manager was in post for a short period. The responsible individual was acting manager until a new manager was recently appointed. Staff have experienced several changes in the management team and, as a result, there has been a lack of consistency in expectations and support.

Most staff are unqualified and new to children's residential care. However, the induction process is thorough, and staff say that they feel prepared for the role. Managers and leaders have made efforts to recruit experienced staff, who have recently started work in the home.

Staff complete all necessary training and shadow established staff in the home before starting work. Staff complete training to meet the specific needs of the children they care for, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. When staff have not had formal training, managers and leaders ensure that they understand and are well prepared for new tasks and roles, such as being an appropriate adult.

Staff have regular supervision. The quality of supervisions has recently improved. Staff have opportunities to discuss their practice, both individually and as a group. Where practice issues are identified, managers and leaders address these with the individual staff member to improve the quality of care. However, on one occasion, a practice shortfall was identified and not followed up with staff promptly.

There are gaps in staff recording. The computer system does not allow for some information to be recorded in a clear way. Therefore, it is difficult for managers to maintain consistent oversight.

An independent person visits the home monthly. However, the independent person's reports do not give their opinion on whether the children are effectively safeguarded or whether the home promotes their well-being.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) Specifically, that managers and leaders ensure that they consider whether staff are able to meet the needs of the child, before they move in.	26 September 2024
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— 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(vi)) Specifically, that staff ensure they follow the individual missing-from-home plans for each child on each occasion and within the specified timescales, and that safeguarding information is passed to the relevant professionals swiftly.	26 September 2024
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	26 September 2024

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(e)(f)(h)) Specifically, that the managers and leaders ensure that staff work as a team and provide consistent boundaries and expectations for the children, use effective monitoring systems to recognise any shortfalls in practice, and respond swiftly to address the shortfalls.	
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; 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;	26 September 2024

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 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	26 September 2024

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: 2759542

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Accord Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 24 Greek Street, Stockport SK3 8AB

Responsible individual: Karen Buckley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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