

2771296

Registered provider: Guardian Homes (Midlands) Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider and offers care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There are no children currently living at the home because the home is subject to a suspension notice following an inadequate inspection judgement.

Following the last full inspection, the manager and responsible individual left their posts in November 2024. A new manager was appointed, and they have applied to register with Ofsted. At the time of the visit, they were on an extended period of absence, and an interim manager had been appointed. The interim manager has also applied to register with Ofsted. A new responsible individual was also appointed but left their post after Ofsted raised concerns about their suitability. A director of the organisation has now applied to be the responsible individual, and their suitability is being assessed by Ofsted.

Inspection date: 11 September 2025

This monitoring visit

The home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 30 October 2024. Significant shortfalls were identified, indicating that children were at risk of or were experiencing significant harm. The risks and identified shortfalls were widespread, which resulted in an inadequate judgement and a suspension notice being served. This prevents the provider from admitting any children to the home.

A monitoring visit took place on 25 March 2025 to assess the provider's adherence to the suspension notice. The provider was found to have complied with the suspension notice. However, the home was deemed unsuitable and unsafe for children to live in.

This visit was carried out to assess the provider's compliance with the suspension notice issued following the last inspection and to consider progress the provider has made in addressing shortfalls. The provider was found to have complied with the suspension notice. There was no evidence found to suggest that children have been living at the home since the notice was issued. An adult residing at the home at the time of the previous visit has now left, and there is no indication that anyone has lived at the property since. However, shortfalls identified during this visit mean that the home is not currently a suitable place for children to live. A further suspension notice was issued following this visit.

Safeguarding arrangements are ineffective. The whistle-blowing policy directs staff to report concerns about the responsible individual to the director, who is the same person. This presents a clear conflict of interest and leaves staff without a safe or independent route to raise concerns. The proposed responsible individual has not identified or addressed this issue, which raises questions about their understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and governance.

Recruitment practices have not been sufficiently robust. In one case, a reference from a person's last place of employment was not obtained, and in another, concerns raised during recruitment were inadequately explored. In addition, managers were unable to provide evidence that up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service checks had been verified for two staff members. These omissions reflect a lack of rigour in ensuring that staff are safe and suitable for working with children.

The provider has received a whistle-blowing concern in relation to management arrangements at the home and the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. Furthermore, the provider informed Ofsted about allegations against a senior staff member. At the time of the visit, the proposed responsible individual was in the process of appointing an independent person to investigate these concerns.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reviewed the systems in place for oversight of children's care. Internal audits have begun to identify shortfalls, and action plans have been developed to address these concerns. This demonstrates some progress in recognising areas for improvement and attempting to strengthen governance. However, several action plans remain incomplete, and some of the newly introduced auditing tools have not yet been implemented in practice because no children currently live at the home. As a result, the current impact of these measures is limited, and their effectiveness in driving sustained improvement cannot be assessed.

There are currently no staff employed to care for children, and all staff who were working at the time of the full inspection have left. This undermines the provider's readiness to provide safe care for children.

The home is undergoing significant renovations to create a better environment for children. However, this means that the home is not currently suitable for children to live in. Actions identified during health and safety and fire audits remain outstanding.

Managers are addressing these, but they also contribute to the home currently being unsuitable for children.

Frequent leadership changes have resulted in instability and a lack of continuity. The shortfalls identified during this visit do not provide assurance that all leaders and managers have the necessary skills, experience or capacity to provide effective oversight of the home. The interim manager had been in post for five weeks at the time of this visit. She has begun to implement some positive changes, but these are not yet embedded, due to her limited time in post.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/10/2024	Full	Inadequate

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2771296

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Guardian Homes (Midlands) Ltd

Registered provider address: 22 Carlton Avenue, Sutton Coldfield B74 3JJ

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Laura Norcop, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Vyas, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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