

2772513

Registered provider: Bridge2Future Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides care for up to three children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

At the time of inspection, there were two children living at the home. Both children were spoken to as part of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024. They were not present for this inspection.

Inspection date: 28 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 22 October 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector evaluated:

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

Inspectors have 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 serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children's experiences of living in the home are poor. Children do not have positive, trusting relationships with all staff, and have fractured relationships with each other. Both children said that they do not feel safe and are unhappy living in the home. In addition, children do not always feel listened to by staff.

Staff lack the skills and guidance to safely support children when they are presenting with behaviours that are challenging. As a result, significant incidents in the home and incidents of children being missing from home have increased. This puts children at risk of harm.

Children's experience and progress in relation to education are mixed. One child has made some progress with their education and their attendance is improving. However, one child does not attend school and there is a lack of structure and support to enable the child to engage in learning at home. For example, the child does not get up until lunchtime and there are no meaningful activities planned throughout the day. Managers have no plan in place to address this to help the child prepare to return to school.

Arrangements to respond to and reduce risk to children are poor. Managers and staff do not have a good understanding of risk. They do not always take prompt and effective action to manage children's risks and vulnerabilities to support their safety and well-being. For example, one child said that they were scared and had not slept, due to threats from their peer. Managers and staff did not recognise the need to consider and implement strategies to support the child to help reduce their anxieties and increase their sense of safety.

The quality of children's risk assessments is variable. Managers and staff have not ensured that children's plans contain information about all the children's current risks, and so staff do not have clear guidance to follow. This results in inconsistent staff practice, which does not support children to be safe. This is particularly pertinent when there is a high turnover of staff working with children, who do not know children well.

When there is guidance, staff do not consistently follow children's risk management plans. For example, staff do not always ensure that daily bedroom checks are conducted when there has been an escalation in a child's aggression, threats to others and there are concerns around possession of knives and weapons. This inconsistent practice does not fully keep children safe.

On one occasion, there was a delay in the manager responding to a child's complaint. This delay exacerbates children's sense of not feeling listened to.

Poor leadership and management and a failure to take effective action to improve the quality of care in the home have compromised children's safety, experiences and progress. Leaders and managers' monitoring continues to be ineffective and does not ensure that there are clear arrangements in place to protect children from harm or improve the quality of care they receive.

Managers have not ensured that there are sufficient, skilled and experienced staff to effectively meet children's needs. Cover for shortfalls in the rota is provided by staff from other homes in the organisation. Staff are unfamiliar with the children, their vulnerabilities and needs, and the actions they need to take to promote their safety and progress. Children do not receive consistently good care. In addition, changes in staffing do not help children to build trusting relationships with staff who know them well, nor does it help them to feel and be safe.

There continue to be shortfalls in staff supervision. The manager has not ensured that all staff receive regular supervision. This does not give staff opportunities to reflect on and develop their practice and feel valued. In addition, not all staff have had training in the service's model of care. This does not ensure that all staff have the skills to deliver care to children in line with the statement of purpose.

There have been occasions where the manager has failed to notify serious incidents to Ofsted. As a result, Ofsted is unable to carry out its monitoring function adequately to help ensure that appropriate action is taken by the provider to safeguard children.

Managers' working relationships with partner agencies, including children's local authorities, are ineffective. Staff do not always keep children's local authorities up to date with children's experiences or give accurate information on children's routines. One professional commented that managers' and staff's communication is poor and there are concerns around the staff's responses to risk management. This has resulted in a lack of coordinated care for children. One child is being moved from the home, as the local authority is not assured by the staff's approach to keeping the child safe. Managers have served notice on the other child. The lack of good-quality care has impacted on children's stability.

Leaders and managers have not taken appropriate action to address the requirements made at the previous inspection. At the last full inspection, Ofsted raised seven requirements and one recommendation. However, leaders and managers have failed to meet five of the requirements. Repeated breaches of regulation do not provide Ofsted with the reassurance that managers are able to take effective action to bring about the required changes to improve the quality of care that children receive.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/10/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, 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 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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and 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)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that:	27 March 2025

• risks are understood and effectively managed by managers and staff • staff have the skills and experience to respond to children's risks and keep them safe • risk management plans contain up-to-date and clear guidance for staff to follow and mitigate risk • staff consistently follow children's plans to ensure that they provide children with good-quality, consistent care, which keeps children safe. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	
*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; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; 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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that:	27 March 2025

• there are sufficient staff to meet each child's needs • that when staff cover is required, this does not impact on the continuity of care for children as far as possible • staff have the appropriate skills to respond effectively to children's needs • that there are effective monitoring and review systems in place to ensure ongoing improvements to the quality of care provided to children. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	27 March 2025
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust. 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;	27 March 2025

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a) (2)(a)(i)(ix)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff respond to children's needs in line with the therapeutic approach outlined in the home's statement of purpose. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees—receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.	27 March 2025
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— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children are provided with clear boundaries, structure and routine, and supported to engage in constructive activities when they are not in education.	27 March 2025
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a))	27 March 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	27 March 2025

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

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.

A notification made under this regulation—

must include details of—

the matter;

the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and

any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter;

must be made or confirmed in writing.
(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2772513

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bridge2Future Ltd

Registered provider address: Bridge2future, Surestore, Ninth Avenue, Burton-On-Trent, England DE14 3JZ

Responsible individual: Emma Smith

Registered manager: Anna Preston

Inspector

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

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