

2772912

Registered provider: Gemstones Care Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this children's home. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered with Ofsted in March 2024. The home does not have a registered manager. The previous registered manager left before the last inspection. The current manager has made an application to register with Ofsted.

One child was living at the home and two children were in the process of moving out during the inspection. Two children were spoken with to gain their views.

Inspection date: 10 February 2025

Date of last inspection: 3 July 2024

Judgement at last inspection: 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 has 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

Serious and widespread concerns were identified in relation to the care and protection of children at this assurance inspection. Leaders and managers had failed to ensure that children were safeguarded effectively and risks to children were not adequately assessed and mitigated. Staff did not have the skills and competencies to minimise the risk of harm to children.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home and two children were in the process of moving out. Both children said that recent events in the home had adversely affected their mental health and well-being.

Leaders and managers do not adequately assess the risks of admitting a new child into the home. When a child recently moved into the home, there was no consideration of the child's presenting risks and whether staff could safely meet their needs. There was no consideration of the impact that the move would have on all the children involved. As a result, the admission of one child adversely affected the well-being of all children and has led to two children being moved from the home at short notice. Neither child received a positive ending to their placement.

Children are not kept safe because staff do not provide adequate supervision to reduce the risk of incidents occurring or they do not intervene when needed. There are frequent altercations between children that have gone on for long periods, resulting in harm. On one occasion, a child was able to share a blade with another child who went on to self-harm. Staff witnessing the incident were unsuccessful in intervening to safeguard the child.

Allegations of inappropriate behaviour by staff are not consistently identified or acted on to safeguard children. When incidents occur, reports are poorly recorded, and investigations are not thorough or timely. There have been occasions when children and staff involved have not been given opportunities to give their account of what happened. In one incident, concerns relating to the conduct of a member of staff were not followed up. This does not provide children with the assurance needed that they will be listened to if they raise a concern. In addition, staff are not receiving learning from them.

Leaders have failed to take sufficient action to prevent similar incidents from reoccurring. Despite checks being in place, there were repeated incidents where children went missing at night undetected, where children were able to self-harm using the same methods and frequent incidents involving the same children harming each other. There has been little input to help children to resolve conflicts and build positive relationships. This does not provide assurance that staff are learning from incidents to keep children safe.

Leaders and managers' oversight of practice and the quality of care are inadequate. Systems to provide effective monitoring of the service and drive improvement are not in place. There is insufficient challenge to poor practice. Before taking on the

post, the manager had limited day-to-day experience of running the home and has received little support and guidance. The provider has failed to ensure suitable oversight of the home's management, with the newly appointed responsible individual contracted to oversee the home for only one day per week. This is adversely impacting on the quality of care that children receive.

Staff do not have adequate training, skills and knowledge or work cohesively to support the children. There has been a high turnover of staff, which does not provide consistency of care. When incidents occur, staff do not always support each other. There have been occasions when staff behaviour has contributed to escalating incidents and children themselves calling the police for support. There are large gaps in the staff training required to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and understanding to help meet children's needs. This does not help the children to feel safe and cared for.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/07/2024	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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	16 March 2025

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated. In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff protect children from harm. Staff must supervise children in line with their care plan and intervene when needed to keep children safe. The provider must ensure immediate action is undertaken to minimise the risks of repeated incidents in which children have gone missing, self-harmed and harmed each other, as well as preventing incidents from escalating. The provider must ensure that rigorous systems and processes for identifying, recording, investigating and acting on all allegations are in place. Carried over from the last inspection: Children's plans must contain all the necessary information to help staff to support children's safety and progress.	
*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 work as a team where appropriate; 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;	16 March 2025

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;

demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

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)(g)(i)(ii)(h))

This requirement was made at the last inspection and restated.

In particular, the provider must ensure that the manager has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to manage a children's home.

The provider must take action to ensure that the responsible individual has the capacity, experience and skills to oversee the management of the home and to act rapidly to improve the quality of care.

The provider must ensure that there is sufficient, good-quality monitoring of all aspects of the children's care to inform the provider's oversight of the quality of care and to identify any shortfalls.

The provider must have in place and implement a plan to act on any shortfalls and to make continuous improvements to the care provided.

The provider must take immediate action to ensure that staff understand their role and the expectations of their role. Where staff do not meet these expectations, prompt and appropriate action must be taken to address this.

The provider must take urgent action to review the knowledge and skills of the existing staff team to identify any

gaps. Staff must be provided urgently with training to address any gaps in their knowledge and skill. The provider must ensure that staff provide consistent care and work as a team. The provider must review the reasons previous staff have left to identify learning and implement actions to improve retention. Carried over from the last inspection: The registered person must ensure that that children's plans are child focused and include their views, that monitoring systems are developed and implemented effectively and that audits are used to develop the home.	
*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 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) 2(a)) In particular, the provider must ensure that an adequate assessment is undertaken as to the suitability of the home for any children moving in. The provider must ensure any presenting risks of a child moving into the home are assessed in relation to other children already living in the home, to determine whether it is appropriate for them to live together. The provider must ensure that the potential impact of a child moving into the home on existing children is appropriately mitigated.	16 March 2025

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; 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. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated. We were unable to review this requirement during the assurance inspection.	20 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; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those	20 April 2025

expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; 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; 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; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)) In particular, the provider must ensure staff have the skills and competence to help children understand their behaviour and manage conflicts positively and quickly, and without escalating the situation.	
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)) In particular, the provider must ensure that the child's local authority is informed of incidents and other matters affecting them in a timely manner.	20 April 2025
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and	20 April 2025

notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.	
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(Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2772912

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gemstones Care Limited

Registered provider address: International House, 126 Colmore Row,
Birmingham B3 3AP

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Dominique Bell

Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

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