

2799237

Registered provider: Central and Southern homes limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides long-term care for up to two children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

Two children have moved into the home since it was registered in August 2024. This is the home's first inspection.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

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: inadequate

The inspector spent time with both children. Neither child wished to talk about what it was like to live in the home. The inspector observed some positive interactions between the staff and the children, but some of the responses to them were inconsistent. One child identified a particular member of staff who they have a good relationship with.

Leaders, managers and staff do not understand the children's history well enough, and therefore the care provided for them does not meet their individual needs. Staff are not consistently providing an environment that is nurturing and supporting children to thrive or meet their goals. Boundaries are unclear and change daily.

Staff, leaders and managers do not understand the lived experiences of the children and how these impact on their current and future behaviour. Boundaries are unclear and change daily. As a result, children's daily experiences in the home are confusing with mixed messages from staff.

Staff, leaders and managers have good communication with some professionals, but this is inconsistent. When the manager has not been in the home, communication has been poor. One social worker stated that it is difficult to get hold of staff over the phone. This has resulted in one child not being offered an appointment with an advocate, as the advocate has been unable to contact anyone in the home.

Children express their views through behaviour, some of which indicates they are in distress. Some staff have formed relationships with children, and this has led to some important conversations. These conversations are not followed up again by staff or the manager and, therefore, do not lead to any real change for children.

Staff, leaders and managers are not preparing children well for their futures. One child is due to move to supported accommodation soon. However, there has been little work completed with the child around this and there is no plan in place.

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

The staff understand some of the risks related to the children and feel that they cannot keep them safe in the home. Leaders and managers have failed to gain accurate and up-to-date information in respect of risk for the children, and therefore this has not been reflected in the planning for them.

For one child, risks have significantly increased. Staff do not feel equipped to manage these risks or to support the child effectively. Staff comment that due to these increasing risks for one child, the needs of the other child have been neglected.

Staff do not use consistent boundaries when managing behaviour, and children are not clear what is or is not acceptable. The statement of purpose notes that staff are trained in a specific therapeutic approach to support behaviour. However, the majority of the staff in the team have not received the required training for this since starting in the role.

Staff, leaders and managers do not know what children are accessing on social media and their mobile phones. Staff have no clear plan for monitoring children's online access, and they rely heavily on parenting control apps, which have been shown to be ineffective. The child told staff they had met a stranger in person who they had met on a social media platform, which may have put them at significant risk. Despite this, leaders and managers failed to act in putting in any robust or effective planning to prevent future risks of this nature.

Leaders and managers have not acted swiftly in putting plans in place to support children when incidents of self-injury have occurred. Staff are unclear on how to manage these situations. Leaders and managers have not responded effectively to significant risks posed by fire, which has resulted in several incidents where a child has burnt objects in their bedroom.

Staff are unclear on how to manage some incidents, which has led to some physical interventions taking place when de-escalation techniques could have been used. During one incident, a child seriously harmed their hand, and a member of staff was also hurt, following multiple failed attempts at a physical intervention.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers do not know the children or their previous lived experiences well enough. Therefore they are unable to direct staff effectively in relation to the care they should provide to children. Consequently, the standard of care provided in the home is inconsistent.

Leadership is ineffective in providing staff with support and guidance. Staff do not receive regular supervision. When they do receive it and concerns are raised, these are not acted on. Staff are struggling and have not been given the correct support from senior managers.

The manager understands some of the home's strengths and weaknesses, but is yet to act on them. The home is not achieving the stated aims and objectives of its statement of purpose.

Staff, leaders and managers are not clear on the previous experiences of the children and, therefore, are unable to promote their identities or equality and diversity. The recruitment of staff follows a safer recruiting protocol.

Leaders and managers do not always include children in decision-making. Staff have one-to-one conversations with children which are often short and contain minimal meaningful discussion.

The home environment is not personalised to the children. Staff are inconsistent in supporting children to manage their bedrooms, and this led to one bedroom becoming a poor environment for the child to live in. This was rectified during the inspection.

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
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; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that communication with the child's placing authority and other external professionals remains consistent, even in their absence.	4 April 2025
* The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare;	4 April 2025

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))	
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; 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 expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the	4 April 2025

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. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vii)(ix)(x))	
* 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; 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; that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (2) (a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)(b)(e)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that both they and the staff understand both the current and future potential risks and vulnerabilities for children. The registered person should also ensure that this is extended to risks around social media and mobile phone use.	4 April 2025
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—	4 April 2025

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'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;

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 (a)(b) (2) (a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(d)(i)(ii)(h))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that there is effective oversight of the home at all times, including providing regular support and supervision for the staff.

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 2799237

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Central and Southern homes limited

Registered provider address: Pitmaston House, Malvern Road, Worcester WR2 4LL

Responsible individual: Katie Howard

Registered manager: Hannah Pearn

Inspector

Helen Cushnie, Social Care Inspector

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