

2822376

Registered provider: Amelia Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a private organisation. It provides care for up to two children who have experienced childhood adversity.

This is the home's first inspection since first registering a home in July 2024 and subsequently as a multi-building site with the addition of a further home in January 2025. The home does not have a registered manager.

Since opening as a multi-building site, one child has moved into the home. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home and all spoke with the inspector.

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 April 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

inadequate

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 applicable

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

Overall, children are settled in the home and have made some progress. However, there are shortfalls in some safeguarding arrangements, the skills and experience of staff and leadership and management systems. Consequently, this has had some impact on children's overall experiences of living in the home.

More positively, there are warm interactions between the children and staff. Some children say they like living in the home. One child said that the home was '9.5 out of 10'. Children say that they like the staff and that they have favourite staff they can talk to. However, one child was unhappy that her favourite staff were often working in other homes that are 'struggling for staff'. The child did not like being cared for by agency staff, who they did not know well.

All children have made progress in their education from their starting points. Two children are actively engaged in education. There are clear plans to support these children with their academic progress, and children are encouraged to attend their education and to achieve. Managers have advocated for one child, who receives online tuition at home, to attend a nearby school that meets their needs.

Children are supported to spend time with their families and friends. This helps the children to develop a sense of identity and enables them to maintain links to significant people in their lives.

Staff support one child to develop skills for independent living. They regularly talk with the child about managing their money and their feelings about moving on. Staff have important discussions with the child about their plans and encourage the child to develop aspirations for their future. The child has enrolled on a college course, which will enable them to follow the career path of their choice.

Children's internal placement plans are completed to a poor standard. Staff are not guided to support one child, who has a medical diagnosis, with the child's health, communication or personal care needs. Information such as the dates and outcomes of children's health appointments is missing. Arrangements for one child to keep in touch with family are not accurate. This poor care planning leaves staff without clear guidance to meet each child's individual needs and risks children with complex needs receiving inconsistent care.

The environment is not homely in either of the homes. Children's shoes are piled in the corner of communal areas. A large drying rack and a vacuum cleaner are clearly on display in one home. A sofa is stained and in need of replacing. Staff have not supported one child to personalise or tidy their bedroom. Outside areas are stark and unattractive places for children to spend time. Notice boards and, in one home, a leaflet rack, give

the homes an institutional feel. Managers began to rectify some of these issues during the inspection.

Children participate in a variety of activities that support positive relationships and their confidence. Children take part in go-karting, shopping and go on trips to the seaside with staff. Staff arrange activities to develop children's social skills. For example, one child attends a local youth club.

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

Staff lack the skills and experience to manage children's behaviours and guidance is poor. This has resulted in police being called to manage a child's complex behaviours, and incidents when poor judgement by staff has led to increased risks for children.

Staff practice to safeguard children at risk of going missing is poor. A child who is always supervised by two staff was able to go missing four times over four days because of shortfalls in staff supervision. Managers identified this poor practice after the first incident, but did not take sufficient action to prevent subsequent incidents. Additionally, when a child's risk of going missing from care increases, managers do not take prompt action to reduce the risk. They do not ensure that children's bedroom door alarms, set at night for safety, can be heard by staff. On one occasion, staff found the front door unlocked in the morning and signs that a child had left the home undetected while staff slept. Managers are unsure if the child left the home. Door alarms have been made to sound louder to ensure that staff know when children leave their bedrooms at night.

Staff physically intervene when children become unsettled and show behaviours that place themselves or others at risk of harm. However, the records of incidents do not always include all the required information. Leaders and managers do not always review incidents. In addition, managers do not always discuss the incident with the staff and children involved effectively. This means risks for children are not fully understood and ways to reduce risks and manage children's complex behaviours more effectively are not identified.

Managers' monitoring of incidents is weak. Managers do not routinely monitor, review and critically evaluate significant incidents. They fail to identify shortfalls in staff recording of incidents. This means that managers cannot evaluate staff practice effectively and implement improvements to children's care.

Staff do not educate children about high-risk behaviours. One child who has a high risk of racist abuse is not educated to understand and change their behaviours. This leaves the child and staff at continued risk.

When a child makes an allegation, they are taken seriously. Managers follow safeguarding procedures and work with agencies to ensure that the allegation is investigated and the child is safe.

Social workers for all children say that risks for their children have reduced since living in the home. They say that children's relationships with staff are positive, and that staff promote boundaries and routines effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The management team has undergone significant changes since the home was registered as a multi-building home in January 2025. The registered manager is now the responsible individual, and the current acting manager was previously the deputy manager. Posts for two deputy managers are currently vacant. These changes have affected management oversight and review of systems. This lack of oversight does not improve the quality of care for children.

Managers have a range of monitoring systems to assess the quality of care that children receive. However, monitoring has not been effective in identifying shortfalls in practice in relation to the quality of risk assessments and placement plans, the safe recruitment of staff and staff's failure to follow children's risk assessments. Additionally, managers have not identified shortfalls in recording when children go missing from the home. Additionally, managers have failed to implement an effective system to record which staff are in the home and when. Managers, therefore, do not have the necessary oversight of the home to ensure that children are safe and their needs are met.

Managers have failed to update the statement of purpose with details of significant changes to staff. This reduces the regulator's oversight of the home between inspections and does not provide local authority commissioners with an accurate account of the skills and experience of staff working with their children.

Staff care for children alone overnight before they have been fully inducted into the home's policies and procedures. Managers do not have a clear criterion to assess staff's suitability and competence to have this responsibility.

Children do not receive consistent predictable care. Staff are regularly employed across the two homes and a sister home. One child described staffing as 'all over the place'. A parent said that their child was affected by staff being moved between homes to cover shortfalls in staffing. Managers do not always consider the relationships that children have when moving staff between the home and the provider's other home. This compromises children's ability to develop positive and healthy relationships with familiar adults who know them well.

The staff team is inexperienced. Two staff are qualified, seven are enrolled and two are in their induction period. Staff do receive a well-planned induction that includes regular supervision sessions. Supervision is not reflective and does not include feedback to staff about their strengths and areas for development. Additionally, staff do not always receive an annual appraisal. This limits staff's development and their motivation.

Managers do not make sure that systems to ensure the safe recruitment of staff are effective. Managers are not sufficiently vigilant and do not identify discrepancies in

information. They are also not professionally curious when scrutinising available information.

Managers have established positive working relationships with a range of agencies and external professionals. Several professionals said that communication was good, and that managers regularly consult with them to review children's risks. This ensures that appropriate support is in place to encourage children's progress and help them achieve their potential.

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 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— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)(vii)(c)(i)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are supported to personalise and tidy their bedrooms; that the home has sufficient storage; that outside spaces are attractive places for children to spend time and that furniture is clean and well maintained. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that internal placement plans contain full and accurate information on each child and are regularly reviewed and updated by managers.	25 May 2025

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that risk management plans are up to date, reviewed by managers and contain all relevant information to guide staff to safely manage children’s risks effectively. Also, to ensure that staff have the skills and experience to safeguard children; that staff educate children about risks, and that managers take prompt action when children’s risks escalate.	25 May 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— 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;	25 May 2025

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)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they assess staff skills and experience before staff lone work with children overnight; that each home has sufficient staff to provide consistent care for children, and that monitoring and review systems are robust and effective.	
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they update the statement of purpose with changes to staffing, and that information accurately reflects the staff who work in the homes rather than other children's homes in the company.	25 May 2025
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;	25 May 2025

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; 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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))	25 May 2025

This specifically relates to managers ensuring that recruitment practice for all staff employed to work in the home is safe.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that staff receive supervision that enables them to reflect on their practice and that all staff receive an annual appraisal.	25 May 2025

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: 2822376

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Amelia Care Limited

Registered provider address:

Responsible individual: Position Vacant

Registered manager: Position Vacant

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025