

SC000673

Action for Children

Monitoring visit

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation. It provides care for up to five children with learning disabilities under short-break arrangements, and up to five children to live permanently.

The home does not have a registered manager. A manager was appointed on 1 October 2022. However, this person has yet to submit their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 1 November 2022

This monitoring visit

The full inspection of this home was carried out on 31 August and 1 September 2022. During this inspection, inspectors found several regulatory breaches in the leadership and management arrangements. These shortfalls impacted on the children's protection, safety and welfare. In response, Ofsted issued a compliance notice under regulation 13.

This visit was carried out to monitor the provider's response to the compliance notice. The inspector observed children's interactions with staff and spoke with the staff and the manager.

The manager, who is supported well by a team leader and the senior management team, has met the steps in the compliance notice. The manager and team leader are dedicated to meeting the children's needs and know and understand the children well. They use their knowledge to support the staff, who continue to provide good care for the children.

Children are making progress. The staff regularly review and update the targets that they set for the children to encourage the children to make progress. The manager has oversight of this process to ensure that the children's progress continues.

Children's experiences of staying in the home have improved through the consistent use of staff. This allows children to have regular stays in the home and provides them with a routine.

The staff restrain the children only when necessary to keep them and others safe. Documents recording these incidents are detailed and clear. Debriefs with the staff and the children take place promptly, which enables the manager to quickly evaluate this practice. The body map procedure has also been reviewed, and all staff are aware of the new process.

The manager uses an improved monitoring system to review the service. This allows the manager to ensure that the home holds all the necessary information for the children, including consent forms. When a child's placing local authority has not provided the required information in a timely manner, the manager escalates this.

The manager reviews the children's case files and identifies any actions that are required. The manager sets target dates for specific staff members to complete any outstanding tasks, which he then reviews. This means that the children's records are current. However, the manager's audit process had not identified two dates that were inaccurately recorded in children's records.

The manager has also implemented a system to satisfy himself that all staff read and understand any new information regarding the children and that they are aware of any changes to practice in the home. However, not all staff have signed to confirm that they have read this prior to working with the children. Therefore, the manager cannot be fully satisfied that all staff follow any new guidance.

Staff supervision is regular and reflective. The staff report feeling well supported and listened to by the new management team. Staff say that they better understand how to maintain documents and records, partially because the documents and processes have been streamlined. This has resulted in children's records being clear to understand and up to date.

The manager has satisfied himself that all staff working in the home have the appropriate level of skill, knowledge and experience to do so, and he has followed the safer recruitment process.

The manager has reviewed the locality risk assessment, which considers all of the known risks regarding the home's environment. Local agencies have been consulted when updating this document. This enables the manager to fully assess all of the risks in the local area and identify strategies to reduce these to promote the welfare of the children.

The manager failed to notify Ofsted of one incident involving a child sustaining an unexplained bruise. Although this was investigated by the manager and no

safeguarding concerns were identified, this oversight prevented inspectors from being satisfied that steps were being taken to ensure the safety of the child.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/01/2020	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, 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 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	31 December 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	31 December 2022

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: SC000673

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Action for Children

Registered provider address: Action for Children, 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG

Registered manager: post vacant

Responsible individual: Catherine Joyce

Inspector

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector

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