

SC007290

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care for up to four children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been registered since 2007.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection date: 11 January 2022

Date of last inspection: 28 and 29 September 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection.

At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The home has had a mostly settled and stable group of young people since the last inspection, with only one new young person arriving in October 2021. Four young people are in placement, although one is currently living elsewhere with family members. One young person has been living at the home for nearly two years and is now preparing for semi-independent living.

The manager has a good awareness of the strengths and capabilities of what the home can offer. The home has a particular strength in providing a warm, caring and respectful culture to young people. Challenging issues facing individual young people are understood and responded to sensitively and supportively. Staff understand the needs of the young people well and are sensitive to these. Staff challenge some behaviours while looking at underlying reasons and context, and provide a strong degree of emotional warmth and understanding.

To assist with suitable matching, the manager has put in place a 28-day initial assessment period when a young person arrives at the home. Due to the high level of risk and safeguarding concerns, the manager has concluded that one young person's needs would be better met in another placement and, in conjunction with the local authority, a planned move is underway. After a period of stability with the group of young people living in the home, things will change over the next two to three months with all the young people leaving in a planned way.

Since the last inspection, additional work has been undertaken to ensure that processes are prioritised when young people go missing from the home. Two young people have a high incidence of going missing from the home. Staff take appropriate action when young people go missing including notifying the manager, emergency duty teams and the police and ensuring that return home interviews are carried out. Clear records are kept and actions taken by staff are evident, including liaison with social workers.

Staffing has been impacted by COVID-19 and bank staff from a different home, run by the same provider, have supported the staff team.

Monitoring is improving with a monthly quality assurance process and an electronic manager's review process in place. However, the manager acknowledges that this has not been able to have the priority she would have liked and there is more work to be done. The admissions and discharges book is currently being moved online as part of a range of process and recording improvements that are underway.

More activities are made available for the young people, and staff are encouraging them to participate. These include a wide range of relevant topics including anti-bullying, black history and human rights. All young people have education plans on file, although engagement varies. Efforts to provide a structure to the day for the young people who are not in formal education need to continue to strengthen and improve further.

Staff are compassionate and committed and demonstrate their suitable skill to work with the young people. Progress has been made in relation to staff achieving the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare.

The statement of purpose has been updated and a new website is in place. The privately owned status of the home needs to be reflected in these.

Overall, progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the evidence of the safeguarding of children. Some progress has been made in relation to the other requirements and recommendations, with the manager acknowledging that there is more work to do, particularly on management oversight and recording. Four requirements and one recommendation have been made.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/06/2019	Full	Good
07/08/2018	Full	Good
05/09/2017	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 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— promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; and help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(v)(viii)) This refers specifically to staff adopting strategies to encourage children into school, and to provide structure for learning opportunities during the school day if formal attendance is not occurring.	30 April 2022
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; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child	30 April 2022

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— 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)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) This is with particular reference to leaders and managers ensuring that systems are in place to offer consistent practice, monitoring and review to improve the quality of care provided to children.	
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. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1)(5)) This refers specifically to ensuring that the privately owned status of the home is reflected in the statement of purpose, on the company website and on any other relevant documents.	30 April 2022
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; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—	30 April 2022

the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or

a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.

(Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(b)(4)(a)(b))

In particular, the registered person must satisfy themselves that staff have the Level 3 Diploma or an equivalent qualification.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. They should develop more consistent recording processes to promote decisive and effective practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph, 14.4)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: SC007290

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual: Deborah Pacquette

Registered manager: Deborah Pacquette

Inspector

Louise Hocking, Social Care HMI

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