

SC008488

Halliwell Homes

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered for up to eight children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home offers education on site at a registered school.

The home is currently operating without a registered manager. The manager left his position following the assurance visit on 21 and 22 September 2020. A new manager has been recruited and is in the process of submitting his application to Ofsted for the position of registered manager.

Inspection date: 13 November 2020

This monitoring visit

The home had its registration with Ofsted suspended on 7 October 2020. This was due to serious concerns being raised by the designated officer about a number of unexplained non-accidental injuries to a child residing at the home. Additionally, several concerns were raised by a whistle-blower relating to:

- senior staff and managers covering up allegations made by children
- senior managers dismissing staff concerns about other staff's treatment of children and no action being taken
- staff being told to cover bruising and not to be honest with Ofsted about this
- staff not following policy and procedures when a child is injured, such as calling 111.

Further, the child's social worker visited the home and reported that it was in a state of significant damage and disarray, and that there were a number of ongoing incidents taking place with children.

This monitoring visit took place to evaluate the progress made in addressing the above issues, and to review whether the provider had taken sufficient action for the suspension to be lifted.

Inspectors found that internal investigations were still ongoing. The designated officer's investigation is not complete, and the outcome of the Section 47 enquiry is not confirmed. The injuries sustained by the child are unexplained. It has not been possible to evaluate fully the effectiveness of any action taken without the outcomes of these investigations.

The manager and the head of safeguarding both left their posts following the assurance visit on 21 and 22 September 2020. A new manager has been appointed along with a new head of therapeutic parenting (HTP). The manager also takes on the role of designated safeguarding officer. The responsible individual (RI) has also changed. The new senior leadership team is taking action to make the structure more accountable and to strengthen their oversight of the quality of practice in the home. It is too soon to see the impact of this restructure.

Staff spoken to said they would feel confident to approach the new managers and raise any concerns they may have. This follows a review of whistle-blowing procedures and is part of the senior management focus on creating an open and transparent culture. Managers have completed additional training in relation to safeguarding and investigation. However, not all staff have had basic safeguarding and child protection training.

A new monthly monitoring tool has been introduced and is intended to support more rigorous monitoring of the home.

An internal investigation has taken place, and serious concerns have been identified around the culture of the home, poor management oversight and weak policies, procedures and guidance. This identified that not all safeguarding issues had been investigated and dealt with appropriately. The new RI and HTP have worked closely together to make improvements to the homes safeguarding arrangements. Whistle-blowing and safeguarding are now set agenda items within team meetings and supervision. Safeguarding policies and procedures have been revised and are appropriate.

In relation to following the correct procedure when a child is injured, inspectors spoke to staff and found that they were clear about their roles and responsibilities relating to children receiving appropriate medical care. There is a policy in place relating to accidents and injuries which steers staff to err on the side of caution when making decisions about seeking professional medical help. Inspectors found that not all staff had basic first aid training, and this is imperative in ensuring that children receive appropriate care for any injuries sustained.

While there have been no children resident, the home has undergone some major internal structural changes to promote a homelier environment.

It is evident that some progress has been made to support improvements in the culture of the home and to create a more transparent environment. Better systems are in place to provide clearer accountability and management oversight of practice. However, staff training, and the environmental changes needed, are not fully implemented. Not all of the investigations are concluded in order to inform any further learning and next steps. The criteria for lifting the suspension is not met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2020	Full	Good
11/12/2019	Full	Inadequate
05/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/06/2018	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 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))	12 January 2021
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—	12 January 2021

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; 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 expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; 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; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(x)(xi)(b)) This is with specific reference to evidencing direct work with children following incidents, engaging children in key work sessions to address children's relationships with each other and children's specific needs. This will ensure that key work sessions are structured, appropriately timed and completed regularly.	
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;	12 January 2021

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)) Specifically, ensure that physical restraints and serious incidents are recorded and records reflect the full duration of the incident; staff use authorised and trained restraints only; body maps are recorded clearly and reflect detailed accounts of any bruising or injuries to children; staff are trained in safeguarding, child protection and first aid.	
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;	12 January 2021

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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)(f)(h)) In particular, the management oversight of the home should be more robust. Debriefs and lessons learned should be used to support staff to manage children's aggressive behaviour towards others living in the home in an effective manner, to prevent children being hurt. Staff should have suitable sleeping arrangements while completing their overnight shift. The oversight of the review of quality of care report and locality risk assessment should ensure that both documents meet regulatory requirements. Managers should ensure that all staff, including probationary staff, receive regular practice-related supervisions.	
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19 (1)) Specifically, managers' oversight of sanctions should be robust, ensuring that sanctions are discussed with children, and that sanctions are proportionate and restorative in nature in order to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and the staff caring for them.	12 January 2021
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;	12 January 2021

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)) Specifically, restraint records should meet regulatory requirements and reflect robust oversight by the manager. Records should include full and reflective debriefs with both children and staff involved in the incident, to help reduce the level of restraint in the home.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry.	12 January 2021

(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))

Specifically, all children should have a current placement plan on file, and the home should provide regular written reports to children's placing authorities. Children's individual documents should contain consistent information in relation to health and risks.

Recommendations

- Regulation 19(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) In particular, that staff record the work they complete with children, as requested by therapists, so that children's progress is maximised.

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: SC008488

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Halliwell Homes

Registered provider address: The Curtis Partnership, 1 Tape Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1BB

Responsible individual: Paul Bliss

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Cheryl Field, social care inspector

Charlie Bamber, social care inspector

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