

SC022464

Registered provider: PIC Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides care for one child with social and emotional difficulties.

There is a registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 27 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
07/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good.

One child lives at this home. Since the last inspection, staff have worked hard to improve the quality of care provided and progress is evident for the child. For example, there has been some improvement in the child's educational outcomes.

The high use of agency staff has created instability in the staff team. Inconsistencies are preventing the child from developing trusting relationships with the adults caring for her. Consequently, the child is not provided with consistent support to help her manage her feelings safely.

Staff have worked hard to ensure that the child continues to receive specialist support to help with her emotional and mental health difficulties. The child is supported by a psychotherapist. The registered manager arranged for the child's psychotherapist to attend staff meetings to provide guidance and support for staff. Staff say that this input is helpful and that the psychotherapist helps staff understand the child's behaviour and think about different strategies to help her.

Since the previous inspection, staff have struggled to engage the child in any activities. Therefore, she has limited opportunities to socialise with other children.

The child's social worker is positive about the staff and the care that they provide for the child. She described the child as making progress. The social worker was positive about the communication systems in place and she described an effective working relationship with the registered manager.

Staff support the child to see her family members. The child's parents visit the home and staff take the child to visit her grandmother. This helps the child maintain a relationship with people who are important to her.

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

Risk assessments now include clear strategies for the staff team to follow to minimise risks. However, shortfalls remain because risk assessments do not include all the child's vulnerabilities. This is in relation to substance misuse and time spent in the community.

The approach to managing risk is not consistently strong and proactive. Staff practice is often reactive rather than proactive, and although staff act to protect the child when an incident occurs, there is little work in respect of proactive risk management. Therefore, incidents continue, involving self-injurious behaviour and substance misuse.

There was a serious incident of physical intervention when the child and two members of staff were hurt. Records of this incident are contradictory and confusing and staff did not use approved methods to hold the child. Furthermore, the incident has not been robustly evaluated for effectiveness and any lessons learned.

The child told the inspector that she can speak to some staff if he has any concerns. These relationships help safeguard the child. However, there are missed opportunities for staff to enhance their safeguarding practice by using their close relationships to talk consistently to the child about her feelings and how to keep safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has a close relationship with the child. The manager works hard to understand how she and the staff team can improve the child's outcomes. Staff spoken to at the inspection were positive about the manager and describe her as supportive.

The registered manager does not consistently review incidents to understand what happened, and if anything can be learned from the incident, to continually improve the care that staff provide for the child. The registered manager recognises that this needs to improve and she has implemented new systems to help her do this. However, these systems are not fully embedded into practice. This reduces the true analysis and evaluation of the care provided for the child.

The registered manager has effective relationships with the child's social worker and other professionals involved in her life. The headteacher at the child's school is positive about the support that staff provide.

The quality of the child's records is inconsistent. For example, there are gaps in missing-from-home records. Therefore, there is not an accurate account of what happened. This means that it is difficult for the registered manager to review and evaluate information accurately. The registered manager recognises that this is an area that needs to improve.

Staff do not consistently receive practice-related supervision in line with the home's statement of purpose. This includes inexperienced staff and staff in their probationary period. Therefore, staff do not have opportunities to reflect on their practice and the child's progress. There are also gaps in staff training, particularly in relation to agency staff who have covered shifts at the home without any training in self-injurious behaviour.

The registered manager has not met all the requirements from the previous inspection and some requirements are repeated.

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 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— 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; and help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) This is particularly in relation to challenging the child if she is verbally abusive to staff. Staff should help the child use acceptable language.	27 June 2022
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—	27 June 2022

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 understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that all known risks are assessed with clear actions for staff to manage and reduce the risk of harm to the child. Staff should help the child understand and reduce her risk-taking behaviour and learn how to keep herself safe.	
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— 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; 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)(c)(f)(h)) This is particularly in relation to ensuring that all staff have the relevant training so that they can meet the child's needs. Furthermore, the registered manager should ensure that she consistently uses effective monitoring and review systems that show how she is continually improving the quality of care.	27 June 2022
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and	27 June 2022

notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— 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))	27 June 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the behaviour management policy”) which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children’s home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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; 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;	27 June 2022

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 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include 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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	27 June 2022

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: SC022464

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: PIC Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: 2 North Street, Haydock, St Helens, Merseyside
WA11 0TW

Responsible individual: Mark Fletcher

Registered manager: Kellie Fletcher

Inspector

Catherine Fargin, Social Care Inspector

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