

SC022464

Registered provider: PIC Children's Services Limited

Assurance 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.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2019.

Inspection date: 8 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 5 April 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- Not all risk assessments provide clear information to staff.
- Staff have not followed risk management plans. One child has suffered harm.
- A number of requirements made at the last inspection have been repeated.

The care of children

One child has moved out and one child has moved in since the last inspection. Although the child currently living in the home spoke positively about the care she receives, there have been incidents when staff have not followed the plans in place to keep the child safe. As a result, the child has suffered harm.

The manager and staff took steps to welcome the child when she moved in. However, when assessing the risks and planning strategies to mitigate them, the manager did not consider the skills, knowledge and experience of the staff team. As a result, the staff were not equipped to keep the child safe.

The child does not have an up-to-date pathway plan on file. This is a repeat requirement. The manager does not have clear oversight of which documents are on file and has not escalated requests for documents effectively.

Locks on internal doors make the home feel less homely and are no longer required to keep the child safe.

The safety of children

Staff have not always followed the missing-from-home plans. Although the manager has improved the strategies and worked with other agencies reactively to risks increasing, a lack of proactive action was taken. In addition, the manager has not considered the independent return home interviews when reviewing the records after the child has been missing.

Holding children to keep them safe has only been necessary on one occasion. The manager's evaluation of the record was not robust and the child did not receive a debrief. This was a requirement in the last inspection.

A number of risk management plans have been updated and include clear strategies for staff. However, some of the known risks to the child have not been assessed. The plan for staff to follow regarding substance misuse was particularly limited. This leaves the child at increased risk.

Not all allegations and concerns have been reported to the local authority designated officer or Ofsted. In addition, one investigation concluded that a member of staff had put a child at risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

A number of requirements made at the last inspection have been repeated. The manager does not use the systems in place effectively to ensure that plans are in place and actions completed promptly. This includes staff training, supervision and appraisals.

The manager has not submitted a review of the quality of care to Ofsted since the last inspection. This reduces the oversight of the regulator.

The team is relatively inexperienced. Staff have received some training, but not in areas relating to the child's needs. This was a requirement at the last inspection.

In response to the inspection findings, the manager promptly started to address the shortfalls to ensure that the child is safe. Ofsted will return to monitor whether the manager has met the compliance notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
07/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, 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 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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)(iii)(v)(b))	16 April 2023
*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;	16 April 2023

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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)(c)(g)(ii)(h))	
The registered person must ensure that— 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)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the child has received a debrief, and that the overall evaluation of the record is robust.	28 April 2023
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))	28 April 2023
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.	28 April 2023

(Regulation 33 (1) (4)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that there is clear oversight of supervisions and appraisal dates and that meetings are recorded.	
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) The registered person must remove the locks from internal doors.	28 April 2023
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person	28 April 2023

intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(c))	28 April 2023

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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

Sylvia Eboigbe, Regional Inspection Manager

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