

SC025664

Registered provider: Ownlife Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in 2001. The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2023.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 August 2023

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: 15 November 2022

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
15/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/10/2021	Full	Good
12/03/2020	Full	Good
29/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children do not always experience positive relationships with staff who understand all of their needs. This has resulted in a number of incidents involving the police and referrals to the local authority designated officer. As a result, there has been a number of changes to the staff team. This does not help children to feel accepted and settle in the home.

Children have opportunities to express their views about the care that they receive through regular house meetings and key-work sessions. Formal complaints made by children are well recorded, with the outcome detailed. However, children said that the decisions made by staff in response to their requests are not always explained to them, and they do not understand all of the decisions being made about their care.

Children are supported to re-engage in education. One child who has been out of education for a long period of time has started to re-engage in education again. Children's health needs are met well. They are promptly registered with local health services and attend routine appointments. In emergency situations, staff contact health services to ensure that children receive the appropriate medical attention and advice.

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

Children's behaviour support plans do not give staff sufficient guidance on how to manage children's behaviour, and they are not always followed by staff. This has resulted in significant events not being managed well. Additionally, the responses from staff to children have occasionally exacerbated situations, meaning children's safety needs have not always been well met.

Managers and staff have an understanding of children's needs and the triggers for their behaviour. However, they are not proactive in thinking about and considering new ways to support children to manage their feelings. This does not help children to improve their behaviour, which consequently has a negative impact on their well-being.

Risks to children are identified and understood well. Children's risk assessments are individualised and updated in light of any increased risks or significant events. This helps to keep children safe.

Incident reports are well written, with management oversight. However, they do not contain clear information about the learning for staff to ensure that any future incidents are prevented.

Staff conduct meaningful and relevant key-work sessions with children. This helps to ensure that children's voices are heard and allows them to develop important life skills, such as cooking and gardening.

The home environment is warm and welcoming and in good decorative order. However, some fire extinguishers have been moved due to damage caused by children, which compromises children's safety. Managers are ensuring that such extinguishers are placed in secure, accessible and appropriate locations.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers are working hard to create a culture of positivity in the home. An efficient registered manager has made some improvements since the last inspection, such as the timely notification of any serious events. However, further progress has been hampered by the reliance on agency and bank staff. This has resulted in inconsistency of care for children. One child said, 'The house rules are always changing depending on who is on shift.'

Staff and managers receive regular supervision. However, supervision is focused on case records and management tasks and not the needs of children or staff practice. This means there is insufficient management oversight of the quality and the impact of care that children receive.

Children's case records reflect their everyday lives. They are meaningful and capture important details about children's lives and experiences.

Staff training is insufficient. Although staff are offered a range of training, there is a lack of training that is specific to the needs of children or behaviour support. This means that not all staff are able to meet the needs of children effectively.

Leaders and managers work proactively and positively with others. Parents and social workers provided positive feedback and state that they are clearly kept informed of any events or incidents involving children.

The recruitment of permanent and experienced staff is a challenge. Although managers are actively engaged in the permanent recruitment of staff, they have been unable to recruit a sufficient staff team to meet the needs of the children currently living in the home.

Staff benefit from regular team meetings that provide them with learning and development opportunities. However, actions from these meetings are not always clear for staff so that they know what actions they must take to support children's behaviour and well-being.

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 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— 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; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;	22 September 2023

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; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and 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)(viii)(ix) (x)(xi)(xii)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that there is a stable staff team that is able to form positive relationships with children. Staff must have the appropriate training to help them promote positive behaviour and understand how to de-escalate situations.	
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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each children from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))	22 September 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification, and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of the children in their care.	22 September 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive regular supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC025664

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ownlife Limited

Registered provider address: Legion House, 75 Lower Road, Kenley CR8 5NH

Responsible individual: David Hastings

Registered manager: Sharon Odumosu

Inspector

Andy Whippey, Social Care Inspector

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