

SC031479

Registered provider: London Borough of Southwark

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides short-break stays for up to five children who have complex learning and/or physical disabilities and/or challenging behaviours. Children usually stay from Wednesday to Sunday. The short-break service shares the premises with a similar service for adults. There is one registered manager for both services. Staff work across both provisions. The Care Quality Commission regulates and inspects the adult service.

The home's statement of purpose states that staff aim to improve the independence and life chances of children by taking a multi-agency approach to ensure that children can reach their full potential and achieve positive life outcomes.

The home does not currently have a registered manager.

Inspection date: 9 March 2020

Date of last inspection: 10 June 2019

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 the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

No children were using the service at the time of this interim inspection.

Two requirements from the last inspection remain unmet. These repeated shortfalls present leaders and managers with ongoing challenges to providing an effective service for children with complex needs.

Management arrangements have not improved, as the home continues to operate without a registered manager. Two interim managers left the service prior to being registered with Ofsted. The current interim manager has been in post since October 2019. She has submitted an application to the local authority for the permanent manager's post.

Staff are experienced in caring for children who have complex health needs. A requirement was made at the last inspection for staff to improve their recording practice; specifically, this related to shortfalls in the quality of written guidance provided to staff around managing the behaviour support needs of children. The records viewed at this inspection show similar omissions.

Risk management practices have not improved. Staff are aware of children's vulnerabilities and the risks that these pose to their own welfare. However, the strategies used by staff are not robust and lack clarity.

The interim manager has reviewed the statement of purpose to make sure that the home is run in a way which is consistent and in line with this document. However, Ofsted was not provided with the amended document.

The staff team has made improvements to the planning process for children's short breaks. Overnight stays are now arranged in advance. This enables children to form friendships and have enjoyable planned stays in the home.

Senior leaders have assessed the level of support required to better meet the children's needs. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of days the service offers a short-break experience to children from seven nights to five nights. The service is currently going through a consultation process to restructure the staff team.

Staff morale has improved. Staff spoken with said that managers now consult with staff regarding emergency placements to the home. As a result, no children have been admitted in an emergency since the last inspection.

The continued lack of a registered manager means that monitoring of management systems and procedures is not in place in the home. For example, six-monthly

monitoring reports have not been completed. Furthermore, children's case records do not contain information on each child as set out by regulations.

A recent change of independent visitor to the home has begun to show slow but consistent improvements to the service. Leaders and managers are responsive to recommendations made by the independent visitor.

The responsible individual and the interim manager recognise the shortfalls in the service. They displayed a commitment to raising standards to improve the experiences for children using the short-break service.

Despite the ongoing and repeated shortfalls, staff are more positive and stated that they feel more supported by the interim manager and the recently appointed responsible individual.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/10/2018	Full	Good
19/02/2018	Full	Good
12/09/2017	Interim	Not judged

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— - 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; - 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; - help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; - 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;	29/05/2020

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 have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's individual case records contain up-to-date behaviour support plans that specifically refer to the support needs of each young person at times of crisis.	
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— - is an organisation or a partnership; - does not satisfy regulation 28; or - is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— - the name of the person so appointed; and - the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(2)(a))	29/05/2020
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. Case records must be kept— - if the child dies before attaining the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of the child's death; - in cases not falling within sub-paragraph (a), for 75 years from the child's date of birth;	29/05/2020

securely in the children's home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there; and in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, this relates to the statutory provision (if any) under which the child is provided with accommodation.	
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 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))	29/05/2020

Recommendations

- The children's home's staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for young people to develop themselves as part of the home's plan for their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph, 6.4) In particular, the registered person must ensure that written records of goals and targets set for young people include details of the young person's achievements and progress, and provide evidence that such goals and targets are continually reviewed.
- A child's plans should form the basis of their care, and providers should use their judgement as to what is relevant in each case. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 11.1) In particular, in order to improve practice, the registered person should ensure that the home's individual support plans clearly evidence how staff are providing support in order to help young people to make progress in relation to their identified needs.
- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of care provided by the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2) In particular, the registered person should ascertain the views of parents whose children receive a short-break service on the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for children.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the home. This has included the effect these have had on staffing arrangements.

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: SC031479

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Southwark Council, 2nd Floor, 160 Tooley Street,
London SE1 2QH

Responsible individual: Kerry Rabey

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Juanita Mayers, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020