

SC039897

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It is registered for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection date: 2 February 2022

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged inadequate at the last full inspection on 16 January 2020. In September 2021, the provider requested a variation to the home's condition of registration to reflect that it did not plan to admit any children and would notify Ofsted three months prior to the admission of a child. This monitoring visit was undertaken due to the provider breaching the home's condition of registration.

At the time of the inspection, there was one child living in the home.

The transition for the child moving into the home was not well planned. Managers failed to ensure that they received all the information required to inform care. In addition, the child living in the home was not registered at local health services. As a result, the quality of care afforded to children is poor.

Managers failed to provide the child with consistent care. Over a five-day period, 36 different agency staff worked with the child. Inspectors found that there was no staffing rota and the manager was unable to provide information about who would be working in the home over the coming days. In addition, staff had received no

induction into the home. This approach to staffing does not provide the child with continuity of care and affects the child's ability to form meaningful relationships with staff.

Medication practices in the home are not safe. For example, medication has been administered by staff who have not had sufficient training, and there have been occasions when the child has not received medication in line with his prescription. In addition, the storage of medication is inadequate. During the inspection, an unidentified tablet was found loose in the cabinet. The manager could not identify this medication. This practice does not ensure that the child is kept safe.

Risk management is inadequate. During the inspection, the staff spoken to had limited understanding of the child's risk assessment. In addition, written documents had not been updated following incidents and do not justify the high levels of staff supervision that the child receives. Furthermore, there are no internet safety controls to prevent the child accessing inappropriate sites. This poor approach to risk management fails to protect the child.

Staff's recording of physical interventions is poor and managers do not sufficiently scrutinise the records to ensure that the use of restraint is necessary. Records do not explain the preventative steps taken and, in one case, an unapproved intervention had been used by staff. This leaves the child vulnerable and compromises safety.

The recruitment of staff is not safe. Managers have failed to complete necessary checks to ensure that staff working in the home are safe and suitable. In addition, when there have been concerns about the suitability of a staff member, the appropriate risk assessments have not been completed. This does not ensure that staff working in the home are suitable to work with children.

Managers have not ensured that staff have the skills and training to meet the needs of the child. For example, not all staff have received fire-safety training. In addition, managers were not able to provide assurances that the staff working with the child had the sufficient skills to meet the child's health needs.

The statement of purpose is not updated in line with the regulation. Managers have not updated the document to reflect the changes in staff and the changes to the home's admission procedure. This means that Ofsted does not have the most up-to-date information about the care provided. In addition, the home is not operating within its registration.

Leadership and management of the home are poor. Managers have not identified the shortfalls in risk assessments and safeguarding. In addition, managers have failed to provide reassurance about how to mitigate the serious risks and widespread concerns found during this inspection.

Following this inspection, a notice to suspend registration was issued, along with two compliance notices under regulations 13 and 32. Ofsted will undertake a further unannounced visit to monitor the home's progress.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/01/2020	Full	Inadequate
17/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
29/08/2017	Full	Good
21/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child is registered as a patient with a general medical practitioner and a registered dental practitioner. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(c) (2)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that, when children move into the home, they are registered with local health practitioners.	20 March 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— 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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and	20 March 2022

are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; and 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)(vi)(vii)(b)) This relates to ensuring that staff receive safeguarding training, and that risk assessments include all information about known risks to the child and set out clear guidance for staff about how to manage and reduce these.	
*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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for 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)(a)(c)(d)(f)(h)) This relates to ensuring that there are sufficient staff and that they have received mandatory training, and that they receive induction. As well as this, the manager must review and evaluate the quality of care.	20 March 2022
The care planning standard is that children—	20 March 2022

receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that children's transitions into the home are planned effectively. In addition, ensure that children have clear behaviour-management plans and placement plans, and that these plans include relevant information to inform staff about how best to care for the child.	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1)) Specifically, ensure that the home's statement of purpose includes accurate information about the home's approach to admissions.	20 March 2022
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is necessary and proportionate; and allows children as much freedom as possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (c)(ii)(iv))	20 March 2022
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that—	20 March 2022

medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that medication is administered as prescribed. In addition, the registered manager should ensure that storage is safe.	
The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(a))	20 March 2022
*The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all gaps in employment are checked and information about the worker is clear and consistent.	20 March 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.	20 March 2022

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— details of the child’s behaviour leading to 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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use 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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to the provider ensuring that recording of interventions used is clear.	
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the need for a child’s up-to-date care plan and education plan to be in place.	20 March 2022
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b))	20 March 2022

This specifically relates to the home having an up-to-date rota.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC039897

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Council House, Priory Road, Dudley DY1 1HF

Responsible individual: Wendi Grizzle

Registered manager: Kerry Green

Inspectors

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

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