

SC039897

Registered provider: 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 provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2020.

Inspection date: 21 March 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. This was to reflect that it did not plan to admit any children and would notify Ofsted three months before the admission of a child.

In February 2022, a monitoring visit was undertaken due to the provider breaching the home's condition of registration and admitting a child. Following the inspection, Ofsted served two compliance notices in relation to regulation 13, the leadership and management of the home, and regulation 32, the fitness of workers. In addition, a decision was made to suspend the home's registration.

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to consider whether leaders and managers have complied with the suspension of the home's registration and to evaluate what steps the provider has taken to meet the actions set out in the compliance notices.

The inspector found that the provider has complied with the suspension of the home's registration. At the time of the inspection, there were no children living in the home. During the visit, the inspector found that the provider has made the necessary improvements to meet the regulation 13 compliance notice. However, the provider had not taken sufficient steps to meet all the actions set out in the

regulation 32 compliance notice. This notice has been reissued and the suspension of the home's registration remains in place.

The manager has updated the home's statement of purpose to reflect the new admission procedure. When considering the needs of new children and making decisions about whether they can be safely cared for by staff, managers will ensure that known risks, behaviours and needs are fully explored. Furthermore, the manager will not admit children in an emergency and will ensure that any compatibility issues with children already living at the home are considered.

The manager has ensured that all staff working in the home have received medication training. In addition, the manager has updated the medication policy to ensure there is written guidance for staff if they need to safely dispose of medication that is no longer required. As a result, staff are now more able to safely care for children and to meet their health needs.

Previous concerns about the home's staffing arrangements have been resolved. Managers have updated the home's statement of purpose to reflect the staff that are working there. In addition, the manager has increased team meetings and ensured that all staff have received reflective supervision and appraisal. This has increased support for the staff working in the home and has improved the stability of the staff team.

The manager has updated the written risk assessments and the home's location risk assessment. The staff have completed a reflective discussion on risk assessments to increase their understanding of the importance of keeping these documents up to date and their responsibilities when keeping children safe. As a result, the manager has enhanced the staff's understanding of how they should care for and safeguard children.

Following the last inspection, managers commissioned an external audit on safeguarding practices. The report was not available at the time of the inspection; however, the manager plans to respond to any shortfalls identified. In addition, a new independent visitor has been completing monthly audits of the home. These reports are more detailed, and the managers explained that they find them useful.

The registered manager has completed a personal reflection of the shortfalls found at the last inspection to help him identify areas for learning and development himself. This practice demonstrates an improvement in the management oversight of the care provided in the home.

Managers have yet to ensure that staff have completed all the mandatory training. During the inspection, the manager provided evidence to demonstrate that staff have been booked onto the relevant courses. This has been made a requirement and will be monitored at the next inspection.

Recruitment of staff is still not safe. Managers have failed to audit staff recruitment files for all the staff working in the home, and gaps in employment histories remain unaddressed. As a result, records lack the required detail to ensure a person's suitability to work with children, and the manager has not provided assurances that staff working in the home are safe to do so.

Following this visit, the registration of the home is still suspended. Ofsted will continue to monitor progress and review all the remaining requirements and the compliance notice at the next unannounced visit.

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.	24 April 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;	24 April 2022

and 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 the 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 staff have received mandatory training. As well as this, the manager must review and evaluate the quality of care.	24 April 2022
The care planning standard is that children—	24 April 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 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))	24 April 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— 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.	24 April 2022
The registered person must ensure that—	24 April 2022

at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(a))	
*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.	24 April 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— details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;	24 April 2022

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.	24 April 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)) This specifically relates to the home having an up-to-date rota.	24 April 2022

*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

Inspector

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector

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