

SC044231

Registered provider: Progress Care and Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2018.

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 dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 24 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/09/2019	Full	Good
10/04/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/07/2017	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children living at this home have mixed experiences and outcomes. Some children have lived at the home for a long time and have made significant progress with their communication and independent living skills. However, other children have experienced their placement at the home break down very quickly and alternative placements have been sought.

Staff have been unable to meet the needs of some children recently admitted to the home. The registered manager does not use robust risk assessments to inform his decisions about admitting children to the home. In addition, he does not always make effective use of the information provided by placing authorities and families. For example, one child, whose previous placement broke down because of the damage they caused to their home, was admitted to this home without full consideration of how this would be managed. Restrictions on this child's liberty were subsequently required to keep this child safe and minimise the damage they were causing.

The manager does not adequately consider the impact new children may have on those already living in the home. He does not fully consider the children's individual characteristics or behaviours, or how these may have a positive or negative impact on each other. As a result, some children have experienced negative behaviours directed at them by other children.

Children experience restrictions on their liberty to access all areas of their home. For example, lockable doors were installed to prevent one child accessing the upstairs and the garden. This meant all children were subject to these arrangements. While the door to the upstairs was removed when one child left the home, the lock remains on the door to the back garden. This is a barrier to children accessing the garden freely. A recommendation has been made that this arrangement is kept under review to ensure that it remains necessary and proportionate.

Children's care plans are detailed and contain information about routines that are important to children. This helps staff to care for children in a consistent way. However, the provider has struggled to recruit staff, and there is a reliance on agency staff and staff from other children's homes in the organisation to cover vacancies in the staff roster. This means that children do not receive continuity of care. Some parents told the inspector that all the staff changes have a negative impact on their children.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

There has been one very serious safeguarding incident. Poor risk management and a lack of effective action to reduce risk have resulted in a child being harmed. The registered manager failed to assess the risk a child's behaviour presented. He also failed to take adequate steps to prevent the incident happening again.

The registered manager has not adequately reviewed the child's environment or supervision levels to ensure that they remain safe for the child. This fails to safeguard the child from preventable harm. In addition, no written guidance is available on the child's records to support staff to safely manage periods when the child is unsupervised. This does not promote a consistent and safe response to safeguarding children. Staff spoken to by the inspector had a different understanding of the actions they should take when the child requests unsupervised time than that described by the manager.

Immediate changes were made by the provider during the inspection to make the child's environment safe and to increase staff supervision levels for this child. A compliance notice has been issued in relation to Regulation 12, the protection of children standard.

Some children are supported to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, with careful planning and support from staff, two children no longer use continence aids.

Children's health needs are well understood and responded to effectively. The manager is proactive in sourcing specialist support for children from health professionals. Good collaboration between the manager and health professionals helps to ensure that children are healthy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

This home is led by an experienced and suitably qualified manager. However, shortfalls in risk management and pre-admission planning are having an adverse impact on the experiences of children living at this home.

The registered manager has failed to adequately assess known risks to the safety and well-being of a child. In addition, staff are not provided with written guidance to support them to manage risks to this child safely and consistently.

The manager does not reflect on serious incidents and significant events, such as placement breakdowns, in order to improve the quality of care provided to children in the home. In addition, the manager does not use robust monitoring to support his understanding of incidents that take place in the home. For example, the manager does not monitor the frequency with which one child is exhibiting negative and controlling behaviour towards another child. This hampers his understanding of the child's lived experience.

An insufficient number of staff have received training to aid their understanding of supporting children who may have autism spectrum disorder. This does not meet the needs of the children who live in this home. It is also not in line with the homes statement of purpose, which states that the range of needs for which the home provides care includes children who may have autistic spectrum disorders.

Children do not benefit from continuity of care. There is a reliance on the use of agency staff to cover vacancies in the staff team. The provider recognises this issue and has taken steps to try to address this. However, this remains an unresolved issue for this home. It means that children experience many changes in the people who care for them. This is a barrier to children forming long-lasting relationships.

The quality of recording is variable. Some children's care plans contained inaccurate information and the records of a significant incident omitted important details about the event. A requirement has been made to improve practice in this area.

Four requirements have been made to address the shortfalls identified during the inspection. Three requirements are subject to compliance notices, and the progress the provider is making will be closely monitored by Ofsted.

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 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; 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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(d))	10/04/2022
*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	10/04/2022

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's workforce provides continuity of care to 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)(e)(f)(h))	
*The care planning standard is that children— 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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	10/04/2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c))	10/04/2022

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any restrictions placed on the liberty of children to access all areas of their home and garden are kept under regular review to ensure that they remain necessary and proportionate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10).

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: SC044231

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Progress Care and Education Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Wendy Sparling

Registered manager: Andrew Law

Inspector

Sophie Thomson, Social Care Inspector

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