

SC045096

Registered provider: Blackford Education (schools) Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people. The care packages usually include the provision of education at the company's school.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2019.

Inspection date: 23 January 2020

Date of last inspection: 24 April 2019

Judgement at last inspection: 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 good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the previous inspection, a new registered manager has been appointed. She was previously the deputy manager of the home and has been employed by the organisation for many years. She is currently undertaking the level 5 diploma.

The children are very happy and relaxed at this home. When they return from school, staff give them a hug to welcome them home and they chat together about the plans for the evening. Children attend clubs, such as the local youth club and ballet classes, and one child is a member of the local football team. As a result of this, children are making friends with the local children and have positive social opportunities.

Children said that they are happy at this home. At the time of the inspection, the inspector spoke to a child who said that he had a great Christmas and lots of presents. He said that he goes to the local skate park and meets up with his friends, as part of being more independent. He said that he feels safe because staff text him and sometimes 'they turn up' to make sure he is OK. This is a strong example of good parental care and support.

Since the previous inspection, some children have left the home to go to adult services and others to planned foster care. In addition, some children have moved in from other children's homes within the organisation. These were planned moves, and records demonstrate that children experienced a smooth and sensitive move.

Leaders and managers take prompt action when safeguarding concerns arise. They communicate safeguarding matters to safeguarding agencies and other professionals effectively. This is good partnership working. Following safeguarding concerns, staff reflect on their practice to ascertain whether anything could have been done differently and whether any lessons have been learned. In addition, comprehensive records detail the discussions that staff have had with the children to provide them with education and support in relation to positive relationships, puberty and teenage years.

As a result of a recent safeguarding concern, the registered manager and a staff member have attended specific accredited training that is aimed at helping them to support teenagers in matters including sex and healthy relationships. This is a positive step forward and it focuses on children's specific needs about growing up.

The two requirements made at the last inspection have been met. As a result of this, staff receive regular one-to-one supervision, and sanctions are no longer used.

Since the previous inspection, the use of restraint has increased. This is because some of the children have recently experienced personal difficulties and have become very upset. Generally, the registered manager undertakes a thorough evaluation of restraint records and looks for triggers and trends. She evaluates the appropriateness of interventions used in order to ensure that the measure is only used as a last resort. However, closer scrutiny of restraint records is needed to ensure that the de-escalation skills and techniques that staff use are always effective. Mostly, restraint records are detailed and well written. However, some records are not always clear and concise, and some include institutional-type language.

Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that Ofsted receives all the independent visitor's report in a timely manner.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/04/2019	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/10/2017	Full	Good
15/03/2017	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
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(h)) In particular, ensure that the registered manager scrutinises restraint records to ensure that the staff's de-escalation skills and approaches to manage children's behaviours are effective. In addition, ensure that a plan is developed to reduce the use of restraint.	31/03/2020
44: Independent person: visits and reports The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (6)(a)(7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) In particular, ensure that the reports are sent to HMCI in a timely manner.	31/03/2020

Recommendations

- Ensure that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

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: SC045096

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blackford Education (schools) Ltd

Registered provider address: Blackford House, Blackford, Minehead TA24 8SY

Responsible individual: Alan Wilkes

Registered manager: Kelly Field

Inspector

David Kidner, social care inspector

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