

SC047483

Registered provider: Mulberry House Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home offers care for up to three children who may have experienced neglect, abuse or trauma which has left them vulnerable.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2019.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 October 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: not judged

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2018	Interim	Not judged
15/05/2017	Interim	Not judged
13/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13/07/2016	Full	Good

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
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))	11/10/2019
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— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of 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 name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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	29/11/2019

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 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	29/11/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should provide a nurturing and supportive environment that is homely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There have been significant improvements at the home since new owners took over in December 2018. The home has been extensively refurbished to a high standard throughout. There are new staff and two children have moved in. Children say that they are happy, settled, feel safe and listened to.

There are good relationships between children and staff. These relationships are forged through open and honest communication. When a child was asked what they liked most about the home, they simply said, 'the staff'.

Both children attend school full time and attendance is high. One child had been out of school for an extended period. Staff understand the importance of helping children to attend school. They work effectively with other professionals to identify the most suitable school placement for each child. Feedback from schools was positive.

Children take part in a broad range of activities in the home and in the community. They access local clubs and leisure facilities. This adds to a sense of belonging and purpose in the local community as well as developing their skills and broadening their social networks.

Staff understand the importance of relationships, and support children to see their families. Children benefit from this, which helps them to maintain positive relationships even though they are living away from home.

Children's views and opinions are sought regularly by staff through everyday conversation and individual key-working sessions. Children value this inclusive approach to planning their care.

Children can decorate their rooms as they wish, and a homely feeling prevails. However, due to difficult and challenging behaviours, there is damage to the inside of the home. The small grounds and garden were littered with unused items such as a deflated paddling pool. This detracts from what is otherwise a welcoming and nurturing home.

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

Children feel safe. They talk to the staff if they are worried, frustrated or angry. Relationships between staff and children are strong.

Staff use positive reinforcement. Rewards are used significantly more often than negative consequences. This approach encourages children to control their behaviours. Staff receive training and are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. There is a well-embedded missing-from-care procedure. Staff are proactive if children leave the home without permission and follow them in the local area. There have been no recorded

episodes of children going missing.

The home is generally a safe environment for children. However, several internal fire doors were found not to close properly. The home's deputy manager made immediate arrangements to have the doors repaired. Damaged and ineffective fire doors pose a risk to children and staff.

Children are confident to make a complaint and will do so if they are unhappy or concerned. There have been two allegations made against staff since the last inspection. Both allegations were referred to the designated officer and investigated appropriately. However, Ofsted was not notified of one of these incidents. This compromises Ofsted's ability to monitor how effective safeguarding is at the home.

There are times when staff need to physically intervene to keep everyone safe. These interventions are appropriate and proportionate. However, the recording of staff debriefs requires attention. Failure to keep accurate records can jeopardise children's well-being and compromise the staff.

The home is on a busy main road. Safeguards are in place to mitigate risks in the vicinity. However, the home's location risk assessment does not consider risks posed by local waterways and businesses. This means that some risks are insufficiently assessed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2019 and is enrolled on the level 5 diploma. The manager is supported by a deputy manager. They are both respected by the staff, professionals, the children and their families.

Managers have a good knowledge of the children. Staff understand children's needs and the progress that they are making. Managers realise the importance of children's education, physical activity and helping children to stay in touch with their families.

The registered manager writes detailed assessments to consider potential placements at the home. All the children who have moved into the home since the last inspection are still living there. Good care planning provides children with stability.

Over half of the staff team are qualified to the suitable level and other staff are enrolled on the relevant course. Staff are also supported by a clinical psychologist who advises them in their care for the children. Staff are well trained and say that they benefit from support they receive.

Managers and staff have positive and effective relationships with other agencies. These relationships include challenge and questioning. Managers escalate any issues quickly if they feel that children's needs are not being met. Staff make good use of the knowledge and expertise of external professionals who work with the children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC047483

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Mulberry House Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Suite 1, Oakridge Business Centre, Weston Road,
Stafford ST16 3RS

Responsible individual: Philip Mcvay

Registered manager: Ruth Houliston

Inspector

Ricky D'Arcy, social care inspector

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