

SC051947

Registered provider: After Care NW 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. The provider states that they provide care for up to two children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since October 2021.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

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	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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

Date of last inspection: 1 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/02/2020	Full	Good
01/11/2018	Full	Good
22/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently two children living at the home. They are making positive progress from their starting points and feel settled. One child said, 'It's much better than where I was living before, and the staff are really nice.'

Children build secure relationships with staff at the home. This promotes their emotional well-being and helps them to talk openly with staff. This means that children are more confident in sharing their thoughts and feelings.

Children attend weekly meetings to discuss their wishes and feelings. This includes their suggestions for activities, home improvements and cooking. This ensures that children feel listened to and helps to personalise their home.

Staff carry out regular key-work sessions with children. This helps children to reflect on their behaviours and actions. It also helps children to learn about different cultures and to better understand diversity and inclusion.

Staff support children to understand their health needs and to attend their health appointments. They also encourage children to exercise regularly and to eat a healthy diet. As a result, children are achieving good outcomes related to their health.

The registered manager and staff help children to maintain contact with the people who are important to them. There is a strong focus on family support and establishing children's support networks. This promotes children's physical, social and emotional health and well-being.

Staff help children with education and encourage them to re-engage with school. They liaise with providers to ensure that children can access suitable education or training. Staff maintain routines and boundaries to help children prepare for and return to school.

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

Children have clear missing-from-home risk management strategies. This helps to reduce the likelihood of children going missing and the length of time of each episode. As a result, missing-from-home episodes have reduced.

Safeguarding incidents are well managed. Staff work closely with agencies to review incidents with children. This promotes learning and builds children's resilience. One social worker said, 'I like the weekly progress report. It's really informative and gives me a clear picture of how well [name of child] is doing.'

Staff support children to develop their independent living skills in line with their abilities. They have a better understanding of how to keep themselves safe. This helps children to prepare for their future.

Staff use de-escalation techniques to help children to manage their behaviour. This ensures that physical interventions are rarely required. This means that staff maintain positive working relationships with children.

Staff understand children's risks and behaviours well, which helps to safeguard them. Risk management plans are clear and easy to read. Staff review them after an incident. This helps to prevent issues from recurring.

Staff help children to stay safe online. They raise children's awareness of risks through key-work sessions. This includes learning about child exploitation and safe and healthy relationships, for example.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2021. She has identified and is addressing areas for improvement in the home. This includes the introduction of a monthly monitoring form to help management oversight. A staff member praised the manager, saying, 'She is great, a breath of fresh air.'

Serious incidents are generally reported to Ofsted on time. However, there was a delay in reporting one incident to the regulator when the registered manager was on leave. This delayed the regulator's oversight of the incident. This means that reporting procedures are not clear in the absence of the registered manager.

Staff benefit from regular training and development opportunities to improve their safeguarding knowledge and skills. This helps staff to stay motivated in their role while keeping children safe.

The registered manager completes a quality of care review every six months. However, this fails to include the views of children, parents and external stakeholders, to inform her evaluation. This does not support improvement in the home as it does not provide a clear insight into the quality of care.

Staff feel supported in their roles. They attend regular supervision and appraisal, plus a monthly team meeting. This helps to retain staff and provide children with continuity of care.

While some areas of the home are welcoming and homely, other areas need improvement to meet children's needs. The back wall of the house has a small amount of graffiti on and communal areas such as the bathroom and kitchen look tired. This detracts from the home being a nurturing and homely environment.

Referral processes are not consistently followed in line with the home's statement of purpose. In one case, plans were not provided by the placing authority within the agreed timescales. The pre-placement meeting was also delayed. This means that children's needs may not be fully known when they move into the home.

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, the 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 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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)) In particular, this includes a copy of the child's placement plan provided by the placing authority.	8 July 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 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to the referral process which is set out in the home's statement of purpose.	31 July 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;	8 July 2022

a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that arrangements are in place to report serious events without delay in the absence of the manager.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (5))	31 October 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that a homely and welcoming environment is provided for children which is furnished and maintained to meet their needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: SC051947

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: After Care NW Limited

Registered provider address: 45 Kensington Road, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0RT

Responsible individual: Timothy Blundell

Registered manager: Natalie Hamilton-Ryszka

Inspector

Mark Woodbridge, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022