

SC053145

Partners in Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that staff provide a familial environment where children who cannot remain at home can be cared for in a way that allows them to experience a strong sense of nurture matched by clear boundaries and routines.

Inspection date: 1 November 2022

This monitoring visit

This home was judged inadequate at the last full inspection on 13 and 14 September 2022. As a result of significant shortfalls, Ofsted issued four compliance notices in respect of regulation 10 (the health and well-being standard), regulation 11 (the positive relationship standard), regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard). In addition, a notice restricting accommodation was issued.

This visit will review the progress the home has made in addressing the steps in each of the compliance notices.

Since the last inspection, the manager has been suspended. A temporary manager is overseeing the operation of the home. This change in the management of the home has created a delay in the shortfalls that were identified at the inspection being fully addressed.

Since the last inspection, one child has been discharged from the home and two children remain living there. The provider is adhering to the notice restricting further admissions of children to the home.

The temporary manager has taken some steps to implement a daily structured routine for children. This includes a timetable for education, mealtimes and activities.

The routines are in their infancy. Therefore, the children have not fully accepted or adapted to the new expectations of them. Children were observed to be making changes to their planned routine, such as changing educational activities. This level of autonomy impedes the progress of implementing a daily structure to their lives.

Outstanding health appointments, including dental and optical visits, have taken place for most children. Furthermore, steps taken to address children's phobias regarding dental treatment have enabled a child to receive the treatment required.

Children do not receive full-time formal education. There is no education, health and care plan in place to support a child's progression into full-time education. A second child, who aspires to become an interior decorator, does not have an education provider or apprenticeship identified. Since the last inspection, the organisation has appointed a head of education. As a result, there are some tentative arrangements for one child to visit potential schools.

Assessments to consider a child's mental health, specifically in relation to bereavement, have not taken place. A court-ordered mental health assessment has taken place for a second child. However, the temporary manager or staff are not aware of the outcome of this assessment, nor do they have an understanding of why the assessment has taken place.

The staff are in the process of being trained in the therapeutic model of parenting. They have completed some training modules, including the impact of poor attachment and trauma, and triggers for challenging behaviour.

Behaviour management plans are in place. However, on the day of the inspection, the plans were not available in the quick-access file for the staff. The temporary manager struggled to open an electronic copy due to internet connectivity issues. On review, the plans identify specific known behaviours but fail to provide clear guidance for staff on how to manage these behaviours in the home or in the community.

A child with a plan of independent living continues to receive financial incentives and an independent budgeting allowance. Since the last inspection, staff are taking the child food shopping to help ensure that suitable foods are purchased. However, the budget remains unreceipted. This means that the temporary manager and staff do not understand how the remaining money is used. The manager said, 'We have not had any recent issues regarding substances. We will review the finances if there are problems.'

The manager acknowledges that there remains work to be done to ensure that the home consistently supports positive behaviour and relationships. She stated that consideration is being given to not overwhelming the children who will need to adapt to the changes in how the home operates.

The manager reported that there have not been any incidents of concern since the last inspection.

At the time of this inspection, two allegations against staff have been raised and investigations are taking place. Ofsted has not been provided with any information regarding these matters.

Children have not been reported as missing from care, and no children have been physically held to protect them from harm since the last inspection.

Risk assessments have been reviewed and updated to ensure that the correct procedures are followed in the event of a child being at risk of harm. However, the assessments require further development to ensure that staff have clear directives on the management of physically challenging and disruptive behaviours.

The temporary manager carries out weekly meetings with the placing authorities of the children living in the home. This provides the authorities with the details of improvements being made to the service and offers some assurance that the staff are meeting the children's needs and keeping them safe.

The temporary manager has weekly team catch-up meetings with all the staff. The aim of these meetings is to provide ongoing support and guidance to the staff and to acknowledge the work they are doing with the children.

Work to help a child understand the impact of negative relationships has not taken place. The temporary manager stated that they are awaiting the child to instigate a conversation to progress this matter, as she believes the child is not yet ready to address this. Consequently, the influences of negative relationships and subsequent related behaviours are not addressed.

It was noted during the inspection that relationships between children and staff have improved. One child said, 'The home is 100% better with the new (temporary) manager. We are all happier and the atmosphere is great.'

Staff training is currently being rolled out across the organisation in respect of the therapeutic model of parenting. This training is aimed to help staff understand the effects from disrupted attachments and childhood trauma. In addition, arrangements for staff to receive refresher training in professional boundaries is in place to address practice concerns that have been raised.

There have been no changes in the staff team since the last inspection. A recruitment drive is underway to recruit to the two vacancies.

A new monitoring format has been introduced at the home. This format aims to enable leaders and managers to review and assess the work being carried out in the home and identify any incidents that require additional measures.

The temporary manager is providing staff with additional support during this period of adjustment and change. Staff have received supervision and have been provided with an opportunity to discuss the outcome of the last inspection and the actions required to address the home's shortfalls.

Notifications have not been submitted for the two separate allegations against staff. Therefore, the regulatory body has not been informed in a timely manner of the actions the company is taking in respect of these matters.

The steps required to meet the compliance notices have not been met. The manager and the responsible individual accept that further work is required. Therefore, following this visit, four compliance notices will be issued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/09/2022	Full	Inadequate
08/07/2021	Full	Good
16/01/2020	Full	Good
19/03/2019	Interim	Improved 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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))	4 December 2022
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and,	4 December 2022

where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))	
*The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.	4 December 2022

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child’s relevant plans; understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child’s health and well-being needs; and that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(c))	
*The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child’s respect and trust;	4 December 2022

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(vii)(viii)(ix))	
*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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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; 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 effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(b)(e))	4 December 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;	4 December 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; 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. 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) (2)(a))	4 December 2022
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children’s home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. (Regulation 31 (1))	4 December 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the behaviour management policy”) which sets out—	4 December 2022

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—

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;

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 to do so ("the authorised person")—

has spoken to the user about the measure;

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate;

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. Paragraph (3) does not apply in relation to restraint that is planned or provided for as a matter of routine in the child's EHC plan or statement of special educational needs. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c) (4))	
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; 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))	4 December 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: SC053145

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Partners in Care Limited

Registered provider address: 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

Responsible individual: Krysia Watson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Maria McGranaghan, Social Care Inspector
Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector

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