

SC061232

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It provides care for up to five children with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 2 February 2022.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 14 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/07/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The home has been through an unsettled period. This is due in part to the manager and the deputy being absent for a considerable time. In recognition of the impact on the running of the home, senior leaders have put in place additional supportive measures including interim management arrangements. Early signs are that these arrangements are proving to be effective, but improvements need time to embed.

Children's involvement in their plans require improvement. Their views are not reliably evident, limiting their sense of ownership and involvement in planning for their future. In addition, some plans lack clarity and coherent guidance for staff on how to meet children's needs, which could lead to inconsistency in staff practice.

The majority of children's healthcare needs are met with staff sensitively supporting children. However, the process for children to self-administer medication needs to be reviewed. Leaders and managers cannot confirm how they have determined it is safe for a child to manage their own medication following a previous concern of self-harm. Neither have they assessed the level of risk or identified how it will be mitigated.

The children have good relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff support children to have experiences that help them to make progress and to develop positive relationships with their families. Children and staff spoke excitedly about the summer, where each child had a personalised holiday. These were very positive experiences for the children, with one child meeting up with their family who were on holiday at the same location. Staff celebrate children's birthdays and other events, such as the Queen's jubilee. These celebrations include the involvement of the child's family and friends. Memories of these special events are captured in photo albums that the children are very proud of.

Children are supported to take part in a range of activities and to pursue their individual interests. However, there was a delay in securing funding for a child to attend their boxing club, which is an activity that reduces the child's anxiety. This has now been addressed.

Staff benefit from the involvement of a therapeutic practice lead who joins the team meeting on a weekly basis. The team makes use of this resource to help develop their practice and direct work with children.

Most of the home is well furnished and decorated. However, there are areas that are damaged and in need of redecoration and repair. For example, the window in one child's room is damaged and letting in cold air. Leaders and managers told the inspector that the windows had been allowed to deteriorate to an unacceptable state. Despite this, it was not evident if staff had identified the poor state of this

window prior to the inspection. A repair request was made once inspectors raised this with leaders and managers. In addition, a plan is in place to replace all the windows.

Parents and social workers report having a positive relationship with the staff. In most cases, staff communicate well to keep parents updated. However, a parent has highlighted a lack of communication from staff. The parent said they were not told about important events in the child's life, including progress they are making or events of concern. This view was supported by the home's records that show the parent was not notified when incidents took place with their child.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children feel safe at the home and can identify a number of staff they would go to if they had any worries or concerns.

All staff have received training in managing safeguarding concerns. However, they are not applying their learning from this training effectively enough; safeguarding processes are not followed consistently. For example, a safeguarding concern was not reported to managers swiftly, leading to a delay in the concern being investigated. Another concern was delayed in being reported to the local authority designated officer as required. Some safeguarding records lack pertinent information about the actions taken to protect children. Not all safeguarding records were available for review at the inspection as required.

Children's views are not evident in their behaviour support plans. This is a missed opportunity for children to tell staff what help they would like from them when they get upset or angry. In addition, some of these important plans lack clear, consistent and detailed guidance for staff on how to support the child during these times. This could lead to inconsistent practice by staff. Incident and missing-from-home records also lack pertinent information about the actions taken by staff in response.

Leaders and managers make carefully considered admission decisions, meaning that children are living in a home that meets their needs.

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

Since the previous inspection, the leadership and management of the home have not been effective. Leaders' and managers' oversight and monitoring of the home are weak and have not identified the shortfalls found during this inspection.

At the time of inspection, the manager and the full-time deputy were absent. The responsible individual has a good understanding of the home and has implemented a support plan to make the necessary improvements. This includes a manager from one of their other homes taking on the management role here. Initial signs indicate

that this support plan is proving effective. However, it is early days and its implementation and development need time to embed.

Staff are positive about these developments following a period of instability. Staff report that the current management arrangements are providing them with support and giving them clear directions for their role. The training the staff receive is appropriate and linked to the needs of the children.

Staff supervision requires improvement. Records of these meetings vary in quality and do not consistently demonstrate the discussions held, the support provided or the review of actions set at the previous meeting. These inconsistencies are also present in the team meeting minutes.

Disciplinary investigations take place when required and are of the appropriate quality. However, one investigation into staff practice took 15 weeks to complete, thereby delaying the identification of lessons learned.

The management of complaints requires improvement. Initially, the interim manager reported that there were no complaints in the period since the last inspection. This is incorrect. The interim manager had not been informed of a complaint a child had made while the interim manager was on leave. This is poor practice and does not inspire confidence in the children that their complaints will be addressed.

Overall, notifications made to Ofsted have improved in quality. However, a concern about potential exploitation of a child identified in December 2022 has not been notified to Ofsted as required. Leaders and managers took appropriate action to safeguard the child and inform all other relevant parties.

The manager's review of the quality of care requires improvement. Currently, these reports do not include consultation with children, parents or other professionals about their view of the home. In addition, there is no clear action plan set as a result of this review.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; and provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)) In particular, ensure that children's plans include evidence of their views and provide consistent guidance for staff on how a child's needs will be met.	3 March 2023
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; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	3 March 2023

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)(c)) In particular, ensure that staff assess the suitability of children administering their own medication.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— (a) mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(2)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(x)) In particular, children behaviour support plans lack evidence of the child's involvement and voice in the creation of these plans. In addition, these plans do not provide staff with consistent guidance on how to support the child. Records of behavioural events do not consistently reflect the actions taken by staff in supporting the child. Records of missing person events do not evidence if a return home interview has been requested or has taken place.	3 March 2023
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—	3 February 2023

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; 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; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; and 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) In particular, ensure that staff consistently follow safeguarding policies and that concerns are reported to the appropriate people without delay. In addition, ensure that safeguarding records provide a comprehensive record of actions taken and that these records are available at the point of inspection.	
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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;	3 March 2023

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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(b)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) In particular, ensure that monitoring of the home is and aids in the development of the home.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) Ensure that records of supervision and team meetings include an accurate account of the discussions held and the actions taken to improve practice.	3 March 2023
The registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.	3 February 2023

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (1) (2) (3)) In addition, ensure that complaints are reported to the relevant persons without delay.	
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; (d) 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. A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. In this regulation, references to the PPO include a person appointed by, or working on behalf of, the PPO for the purposes of an investigation under paragraph (2). (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(i)(ii)(iii) (6))	3 February 2023

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. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))	30 April 2023
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure repairs and maintenance issues are addressed in a timely manner. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff effectively communicate with children’s parents to keep them up to date with what is happening in their child’s life. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.8)

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: SC061232

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Registered provider address: City Hall, College Green, Bristol, Bristol BS1 5TR

Responsible individual: Tara Parsons

Registered manager: Joanne Mills

Inspectors

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

Carla Simkiss, Social Care Inspector

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