

SC061678

Care Assist Children's Services Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children. At the time of the visit, there was one child living in the home. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since December 2021. There is a manager in post who intends to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 11 January 2022

This monitoring visit

This home received an inadequate judgement at the full inspection in August 2021 and a further inadequate judgement at the full inspection in December 2021. Since August 2021, compliance notices have been issued three times, under regulations 12 and 13.

During this visit, the compliance notices that were issued in December were monitored and inspectors found them to be unmet. Evidence gathered showed continuing weaknesses in risk management for children and management monitoring arrangements.

Significant shortfalls remain in the assessment and management of risk for children. Managers are failing to provide staff with sufficient clear information that enables them to manage children's risks and vulnerabilities safely and effectively. The plans to manage risks are not reviewed or updated to ensure that strategies are proportionate, taking into consideration the child's age and maturity and any change in circumstances. For example, plans to manage a risk for the child were not reviewed effectively when the risk factors decreased. This does not demonstrate effective risk assessment or management.

Despite the shortfalls identified, some risks for the child have reduced. The child continues to engage with training and is gaining employability skills through his training provider.

The manager has introduced a new system to support oversight of the home. However, these changes have not made a difference to the effectiveness of management oversight. Managers are continuing to fail to identify and address shortfalls in practice and make improvements.

Issues identified as shortfalls at the last inspection are recurring and have resulted in compliance notices not being met for the third time. Furthermore, the manager continues to work the shift pattern, which means that, for most of the week, the manager is not in the home.

The new monitoring arrangements have not been effective in improving the quality of care for the child. Shortfalls remain in the quality of the support he is receiving to prepare him for adult life. While direct work is being completed in some areas, this is not addressing all his identified needs.

Relevant local authority plans for the child are still not being followed. Specific needs such as budgeting skills have been identified by the local authority, and by the child, but there has been no work to support improvement in this area.

Home conditions have improved since the last visit. The home environment is free from hazards, and standards of hygiene are good.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2021	Full	Inadequate
24/08/2021	Full	Inadequate
12/12/2019	Full	Good
16/01/2019	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
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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))	1 February 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 their full potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	1 February 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	1 February 2022

that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(c))	
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. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c))	27 January 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	27 January 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about children should always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to them now or in the future. This particularly relates to key-worker records and children's healthcare plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraphs 14.4 and 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all sanctions are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and proportionate and that they

are relevant and restorative in nature. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: SC061678

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Assist Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: 1 High Barn, Back Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk,
Lancashire L39 6SX

Responsible individual: Peter Jones

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Julia Toller, Social Care Regulatory Inspection Manager
Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector

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