

SC062248

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 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: 21 April 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/06/2019	Full	Good
25/07/2018	Full	Good
23/11/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

The progress for children living at this home is varied. Children have left the home in an unplanned way as staff could not reduce their risk-taking and criminal behaviour. The provider made the decision for children to move out of the home due to an increase in risk and poor planning regarding some children living together.

The care and support children receive are not good enough. Staff provide children with the right level of supervision to meet their needs and regular key-work sessions. However, children's engagement and progress vary. Although children are routinely praised for their behaviours, there is little oversight by managers to evaluate if children are making progress from their individual starting points. Gaps in managers' evaluation do not support staff to help children reach their full potential.

Staff do not provide children with routine and boundaries. Therefore, children do not receive consistent care to help them throughout the day.

Staff help children to maintain their relationships with family members. Staff are sensitive to the complexities of visits and are flexible to the needs of the family. This support means that children maintain family links that are crucial to their sense of identity.

Social workers gave positive feedback, saying that children have positive relationships with staff.

Education is promoted in the home. The manager and staff support children to attend school. This enhances children's educational opportunities.

The home is well maintained and personalised although two of the children's bedrooms, which are currently empty, will need new furniture before any other children move into the home. The provider needs to ensure that all items are purchased before another child moves into the home.

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

Children are not receiving good enough help and protection, but there are no serious failures that leave them either being harmed or at risk of harm.

Staff do not always identify and manage risks in the home to keep children safe. When children have made allegations, managers have not acted in a timely way to ensure that children are safe. Incidents are not recorded and reviewed by managers.

Children have risk assessments and behaviour management plans in place. However, they are not updated following any incidents.

There is an inconsistent response to behaviour management in the home. Behaviour management plans do not include clear guidance for staff to follow. Managers and staff do not always have the appropriate skills and experience to de-escalate children's behaviour and keep them safe. For example, staff locked themselves in the staff office when there was an incident at the home meaning that children were left unsupervised. Police were called to manage the situation.

There have been a high number of physical restraints since the last inspection. Physical restraints have not been managed in line with safeguarding procedures, and they are not used in accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child and staff. Prior to the inspection, this had not been recognised by leaders and managers as an area that needed to improve.

There is a stable team of staff who are passionate and committed. However, the outcomes for some of the children remain poor. The registered manager does not consistently help staff, to ensure that they are helping children and reducing risks. As a result, potential risks have not been managed well to keep children safe.

The registered manager follows safer recruitment procedures and staff are suitably vetted to ensure children's safety. The staff team provides consistent care to help children feel safe and protected.

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

The registered manager does not have effective monitoring and reviewing systems to ensure that all records are up to date and accurately reflect risk. Some records are of good quality and demonstrate the skills of the staff. However, the registered manager has not analysed and evaluated all records. As a result, opportunities are being missed to improve the outcomes for children.

Managers have moved children into the home without identifying and assessing their individual needs and their compatibility with children already living in the home. Managers do not consider if the staff team has the skills and experience to support children's individual needs. Consequently, this has negatively affected children's progress and experiences, including disruptions to their placements.

Staff have regular reflective supervision with the manager or a senior staff member. They also have annual appraisals to support them to identify any learning needs or development opportunities. Team meetings are regular and well attended and are valued by the team.

Regulation 44 reports are not completed in line with regulation. External monitoring reports are not managed in line with regulation because the independent visitor to does not record an opinion as to whether children are safeguarded effectively.

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. staff must help each child to understand how to keep safe and 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. The registered person must take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; 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. The registered person must ensure that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(e)) This specifically relates to ensuring risk assessments include all known risks and are reviewed and updated regularly.	21 March 2023
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.	21 March 2023

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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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)(b)(c)(d)(e)(h)) This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring sufficient oversight of incidents.	
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— 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)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children are well matched.	21 March 2023
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—	21 March 2023

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 ensure that— 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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(c))	
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. In particular, the registered person must ensure that the independent person is visiting the home at least once a month and that the independent person must consult with stakeholders, including children living in the home. There should be a clear opinion in the report about the safeguarding of children and whether their well-being is promoted. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (4)(a)(b))	21 March 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's records are available and accessible to them. Children should be encouraged to contribute to their records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6)

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: SC062248

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Registered provider address: Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

Responsible individual: Anthony Nolan

Registered manager: Mark Wellbelove

Inspectors

Kayleigh Treanor, Social Care Inspector
Jessica Higginson, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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