

SC063284

Registered provider: Building Bridges Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home, registered to provide care for up to five children who may be experiencing social and/or emotional issues.

At the time of inspection there were five children living in the home. Inspectors were able to speak to four of the children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2022.

This inspection was scheduled in order to address specific concerns or allegations received by Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 19 September 2023

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
19/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/11/2021	Full	Good
15/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's experiences and progress are compromised by ineffective management oversight and poor-quality care. Care is poorly planned. Children's local authority care plans are not always obtained or are out of date. As a result, staff have not used the most recent information to plan children's day-to-day care. Children's individual needs are not clearly identified in care planning documents. Managers do not have an effective system to monitor and review children's progress. Leaders and managers do not understand the impact of care on children's experiences.

Children do not have positive, trusting relationships with staff. Children said they do not trust staff to talk to about their worries and problems. There are also significant concerns regarding the conduct and professional boundaries of one member of staff. This is currently subject to police and internal investigation. Children do not feel secure.

Children's experiences of education are inconsistent. One child has made progress, having undertaken academic qualifications and is now moving on to a college. However, staff have not supported the other children to consistently engage with education. Children who are out of formal education do not have good routines or structured opportunities to learn. Support for children's education, work and training is poor.

Children's families and professionals said that communication and information sharing is poor. One parent has been excluded from important decision-making for their child. As a result, children do not receive well-coordinated care.

Staff do not keep the home clean and tidy. Broken glass and other rubbish in the garden had not been cleaned. Children's bedrooms are not all kept to a good standard of cleanliness and children have not all been supported to personalise their rooms. Parts of the home smell of cat urine and the cat litter tray is not kept in a sanitary manner. Children are not provided with a hygienic, homely environment.

The statement of purpose describes that children benefit from a therapeutic model of care. Children do not yet receive care which reflects this approach.

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

Leaders and managers do not have effective oversight of risk. Staff do not have guidance about how to manage all risks. This places children at risk of harm.

Risk management plans lack clarity and do not include all known risks. Important safeguarding information is not included in children's plans. Plans do not consider how children's risks may interact. Staff do not have all the information they need to safeguard children.

Leaders and managers have not acted promptly or with professional curiosity when investigating staff conduct. This means children are not being effectively protected from harm.

Staff do not always share information within the team. Vital information has not been shared with all staff, particularly when handing over information between shifts. Leaders and managers are in the process of improving processes for sharing information internally.

Staff receive training in relation to safeguarding and risk. Managers do not ensure that staff understand important safeguarding practices, such as whistleblowing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers do not have adequate oversight of the home. Leaders and managers do not understand the home's strengths and weaknesses. Managers have not met all the requirements made at the last inspection. Care continues to fall below a good standard.

Children's records are poor and lack clarity. There are significant gaps in children's records, with important documents frequently missing. Staff do not always sign and date their records. Managers have not corrected poor quality plans and risk assessments. Leaders and managers do not take action to address shortfalls in practice.

Leaders and managers do not provide staff with consistent, useful feedback. Management records about staff practice are sometimes very brief or entirely missing significant documents. Managers do not help staff to improve the quality-of-care children receive.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities or training. Managers have not made sure that staff have all the information they need to keep children safe. This means that children experience a poor response to risk.

Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal. When concerns arise about staff practice, managers discuss these appropriately? with staff. However, targets set from these meetings are not always reviewed or completed. This limits the effectiveness of management oversight of staff practice.

An independent person visits the home each month. Their reports do not currently contain a detailed analysis of safeguarding practice in the home. This is a missed opportunity for helpful external feedback to support practice improvements.

The manager is not yet leading the home in a way that matches the aims detailed in the provider's statement of purpose. Standards of care are poor and children are not consistently making progress.

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 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; 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)(iv)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, the registered provider must make sure that all known risks are identified, explained and have a clear action plan for staff to follow. The registered provider must make sure that any complaints, particularly concerns about poor staff practice, are thoroughly	15 September 2024

investigated by the provider, in line with safeguarding procedures. The registered provider must make sure that there are systems in place to ensure regular open communication with other professionals and children's families. The registered provider must make sure that children are provided with a clean, hygienic and safe home environment.	
* 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; 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; 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)(b)(c)(d)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered provider must make sure that staff have all the information they need to understand each child's individual needs and risks and how to respond to these. The registered provider must make sure that when concerns or risks arise they are robustly investigated and thorough safety plans are implemented.	15 September 2024

The registered provider must make sure that internal and external monitoring systems are used effectively to identify and address shortfalls in the care children receive. The registered provider must ensure that children's records are of a consistently good quality. Records must be signed and dated by the author of each entry. The registered provider must make sure that evidence of management oversight is consistent and helpful. In particular, all significant incidents must be evaluated, taking into consideration any learning outcomes that can be implemented within children's risk management plans, or to support the development of staff.	
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 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)(d))	14 November 2024
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; 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;	14 November 2024

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.

(Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(ix)(x))

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: SC063284

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Building Bridges Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Mill Farm, Bull Bridge Lane, LIVERPOOL L10 6LZ

Responsible individual: Peter Barron

Registered manager: Lisa McDonough

Inspectors

Nicola Shaw, Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Paulette Forbes, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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