

SC064663

Registered provider: Eastfield Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to seven children with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The home has been without a registered manager since 18 June 2022.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2022	Full	Good
26/10/2021	Full	Inadequate
09/04/2019	Full	Good
12/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that their home is very homely and they enjoy living there. They also say that they feel supported by the staff team and feel safe in the area. One social worker said: '[Name of child] is doing the best she has ever done, anywhere. She has really settled in and is now opening up.'

Children engage in different activities, including day trips to local resorts. One child is an active member of her Children in Care Council. This enables her to talk about her experiences of being in care and improve services at a wider level. As a result, she is developing her confidence and social skills.

Children build secure relationships with staff at the home. This promotes their emotional well-being and helps them to talk openly with staff. This means that children are more confident in sharing their thoughts and feelings.

There has been a relatively high turnover of staff in recent months. However, children feel that they have good relationships with all members of staff. One child said, 'The staff have been the same most of the time, so I have got to know them well. There's always someone to talk to.'

All children are in education and they are generally making good progress. Children have up-to-date education plans that staff review regularly. The staff team maintains good links with local schools and this supports children's learning.

Staff help children to manage their health needs. Children register with doctors and dentists and access support from a wide range of other services. This means that children's routine appointments and checks are up to date.

Staff do not encourage children to access and contribute to their records. This means that some children may not understand their plans or agree with them. This is a missed opportunity for children to reflect on and understand their history.

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

The home is spacious and welcoming and provides a good environment for children. Pictures of children adorn the walls throughout the communal areas. The home has a calm and relaxed atmosphere that helps children to feel safe and secure.

Children attend regular key-work sessions with staff. The staff use a range of resources to help children to reflect on their behaviours and actions. This helps children to become more aware of risks, such as online harm.

Staff use de-escalation techniques to help children to manage their behaviour. This ensures that physical interventions are rarely required. This means that staff

maintain positive working relationships with children. One child said, 'The staff have to be professional but they're also like your family.'

The manager actively pursues a multi-agency response to safeguarding concerns. She challenges the wider workforce if responses are not satisfactory. This promotes information-sharing and reduces drift and delay.

Managers are improving risk management processes and communication. However, plans do not consistently include clear strategies for staff to follow. As a result, this can lead to inconsistent responses to children's needs.

Strategies for responding to incidents when children are missing from home are clear and robust. This means that staff are clear about the expectations of them if a child is missing. This helps to reduce the number of missing-from-home incidents.

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

The position of registered manager is currently vacant. At the time of the inspection, the responsible individual was not available due to being on annual leave. The deputy manager and senior support worker supported this visit.

Staff feel supported by the current management team. They attend regular team meetings and supervision sessions, which help them to reflect on their performance and to identify training to meet children's needs. This also keeps staff focused and motivated in their roles. One member of staff said, 'I enjoy working here. It has made me grow as a person.'

Managers' oversight of children's records is good. As a result, the staff team's quality of practice is improving. This also means that children make good progress.

Managers ensure that there are suitable levels of staffing in the home. However, the manager does not consistently record the names of staff on the duty rosters. This is not safe practice for children, as there is no clear record of who was working with children at any given time.

Managers generally report serious incidents to Ofsted on time. However, there have been delays in reporting some incidents to the regulator. This delays the regulator's oversight of the incident and affects children's safety.

The manager completes a quality of care review every six months. However, this fails to include the views of children, parents and external stakeholders, to inform the manager's evaluation. This does not support improvement in the home as it does not provide a clear insight into the quality of care.

Care planning for some children is hampered when they are admitted to the home as the placing authorities do not consistently provide children's relevant plans within

the agreed timescales. This means that children's needs may not be fully known when they move into the home.

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; 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)(b)) This specifically relates to children's safety plans and the need for clear strategies for keeping children safe when a risk arises.	16 September 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— 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; that staff help each child to access and contribute to the	16 September 2022

records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)) In particular, this relates to the provider only accepting placements for children when they are satisfied that they can meet the child's needs as detailed in their relevant plans.	
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)) Specifically, staff rosters should detail the names of all staff who are working on each day and be kept up to date.	16 September 2022
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))	16 September 2022
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;	31 October 2022

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.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.
(Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plan contains the necessary staffing structure and the details for managing poor performance. The plan should meet the requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: SC064663

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Eastfield Group

Registered provider address: Eastfield Group, 6d Reyground House, 6b
Reyground Lane, Formby, Merseyside L37 7EQ

Responsible individual: Ivy Thompson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Mark Woodbridge, Social Care Inspector

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