

SC066010

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection date: 5 October 2022

Date of last inspection: 20 April 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

There are currently three children living at the home. Two of the children have benefited from a period of stability in recent months after one child was moved on. This move was necessary as the staff were unable to successfully manage this child's behaviour that compromised the safety of everyone.

The admission of a third child in recent weeks was planned effectively. Their compatibility with the existing children has been assessed as a suitable match. The child had a careful transition to the home, which provided them with a good opportunity to meet the children in the home and staff before deciding if they wanted to live there. This shows that it is evident that children are valued and involved in their care from the start.

The children are settled. One child said, 'I am very happy here.' Another child described the staff as 'awesome'.

The registered manager is a good advocate for the children because he understands their individual needs. Relationships between the staff and children are based on reliability and trust. This enables children to feel sufficiently comfortable to approach the staff to talk about any of their worries or concerns. Most of the children enjoy having banter with each other and the staff. Some young people who have left the home stay in touch with the registered manager and staff. This is testament to the strong relationships that have grown between them.

Most children experience regular school and college attendance. One child is an enthusiastic member of a group that represents other students at college, which teaches them extra-curricular skills. The children's achievements are recognised, celebrated and rewarded by leaders, managers and the staff. The registered manager is working well with other agencies to support one child to return to school.

Children participate in a range of fun and interesting activities that provide lasting memories. Staff support children to see their friends and attend groups that promote their individuality.

Staff support the children's physical and emotional health well. They ensure that the children attend their health appointments. Interventions from specialist health services and the in-house clinician are in their early stages. Collectively, through this involvement, staff aim to improve the mental and emotional health of the children.

The safety of children

Staff are guided by the written risk assessments that are tailor-made for each child. The risk assessments identify the strategies that the staff must follow to mitigate the risks to protect the children's vulnerabilities. This promotes the well-being of the children.

Currently, no children are known to be at risk of sexual, criminal or any form of exploitation. Staff respond promptly when children go missing from the home. They follow the child's missing-from-home protocol and collaborate with the police and other agencies to ensure the children's safe return. The manager knows the children well. This, along with any information that is obtained from the return home interviews, is used to minimise further incidents.

Children benefit from routines that help them to feel safe. The staff's training in behaviour management and them following the child's behaviour management plans promote positive parenting. Clinical advice and support also provide the staff with a forum to discuss the children, which helps to inform their care of the children. One professional said, 'The staff here are good. They are receptive, and when they have guidance, they apply. They have an empathetic approach to the children.'

Physical intervention is used by staff as a last resort. This practice is scrutinised by the managers to ensure that it is fair and proportionate, and to determine if any learning is required.

Safeguarding concerns have been addressed in consultation with other agencies to ensure the safety of children. The registered manager has notified Ofsted about significant incidents. However, Ofsted was not notified about one incident that involved police intervention. This prevented Ofsted from monitoring the safeguarding practices at this home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The registered manager remains invested and committed to the children's well-being and progress. In response to one child's placement ending prematurely, the provider has improved their processes and practice to prevent similar outcomes for any other children. The registered manager has also agreed not to accept any further children into the home.

The registered manager ensures that the staff receive training and support so that they can promote the children's welfare and care for the children safely. Staff spoken to express satisfaction in their role. Staff who have failed to show the expected level of professionalism no longer work at the home.

Since the last inspection, the responsible individual has visited the home once and visits will take place every three months. This enables the responsible individual to see first-hand the quality of care that the children receive.

The registered manager understands the home's strengths and most of the areas for improvement. Independent visits have continued to take place monthly, and the provider is responsive to the recommendations raised by the independent visitor. However, the lack of consistent independent visitors to the home does not enable constructive relationships to be formed between the visitor, children and staff team.

Leaders and managers deal with complaints quickly. They ensure that complaints are acted on to the child's satisfaction. One issue raised by a child during the inspection will be addressed by the provider.

Four out of five requirements made at the home's last inspection are met. This includes the steps taken by the provider to improve staff recruitment practices. The requirement that was made under regulation 6 is not met. While the registered manager is addressing some repairs and replacing furniture, he had not identified and acted on the damage in one of the bathrooms. This requirement is restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/07/2021	Full	Good
08/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to areas of damage not being repaired in a timely manner. This requirement is restated.	25 November 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	25 November 2022

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC066010

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: Robert Sharp

Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, Social Care Inspector

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