

SC066010

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Ltd

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 provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2022

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: 28 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2021	Full	Good
08/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

There are currently two children living at the home. One child visited on the second day of the inspection with a view to moving in shortly afterwards. Another child moved in a couple of weeks before the inspection. The placement of a child who had lived at the home for a longer period ended during the inspection as the provider could not keep them safe. Another child has recently moved on to semi-independence and is doing well. Staff provide children with opportunities to develop their independent living skills. This helps children to learn life skills to prepare them for adult living.

One child's bedroom is not welcoming, and the walls are dirty. There is a hole in the wall caused by damage and this has not been repaired in a timely manner. Some of the wardrobe doors are missing. The carpet and bedding are not clean, and in some places have burns. The level of cleanliness does not promote the child's self-esteem. Furthermore, the lack of attention to hygiene means that children are not being provided with a homely environment.

Children moving into the home do not have positive experiences. The move into the home for one child and the visit for another child were poorly timed while a child living at the home was in crisis and demonstrating escalating behaviour. The home is also in a poor state of repair, and most of the downstairs windows have been boarded up since February 2022. There is no television in the living room due to damage, and the dining-room table is also damaged. While the windows were fitted on day two of the inspection and a television was delivered, this does not reinforce to children that their new home is a homely and safe environment.

Children are supported to manage their complex health needs. Specialist input relating to substance misuse is available for children to help them to address their risks. However, children do not always engage and consequently some risks have increased. Not all staff have been positive role models for children and, consequently, children have been exposed to risk. However, the provider has taken sufficient action in response.

Staff try to build relationships with the children and encourage them to take part in positive activities. Children attend courses that interest them and have made progress in their education, maintaining good attendance. Children who are new to the home have access to an on-site tutor in a classroom environment. This gives children daily structure and helps with the transition into their allocated school. Two of the children were confident to perform a rap they had written in front of a large crowd. This gives the children confidence and develops their social skills when out in the community.

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

One of the child's risk assessments is of poor quality and does not include their pertinent risks. One child is heavily involved in substance misuse, which is having a detrimental impact on their life, and, on occasions, will smoke in their bedroom and around the home. These risks are not in the child's risk assessment. This does not ensure that staff know how to respond when these concerns arise or how to keep the child and others safe.

Multi-agency meetings were held in response to one child's escalating behaviour. Safety plans were reviewed and adapted to better meet the child's needs. Staff continued to follow the child's plan with advice and support from the clinical team. However, this was not always effective. Police assistance was needed to help manage escalating incidents in the home and to help keep the child and others safe. The registered manager recognised that they were unable to keep the child safe and meet their needs, and the decision was made to end the child's placement at the home.

Missing-from-home incidents receive a multi-agency response. Staff are aware of the missing-from-home protocol and apply the procedures when children are missing. Staff have one-to-one sessions with the children following a missing-from-home incident to check on their welfare. This reinforces to the children that staff care about them.

Staff training is ongoing and all mandatory training has been completed. This helps staff with their development and helps them to understand behaviours and signs to look for relating to children being exploited or going missing. Staff have a good understanding of the signs that children may be at risk of exploitation.

Allegations and staff misconduct concerns are taken seriously and investigated. The manager works in consultation with the local authority designated officer and others, such as parents, social workers and the police. The outcomes of complaints are well recorded and provide a rationale for the action taken. For one member of staff, this led to their dismissal. Open and transparent communication means that information is shared, and appropriate action is taken to ensure that children are kept safe.

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

The registered manager is enthusiastic and leads by example. He has high aspirations for the children, which are filtered through to the staff team. Staff spoken to at the inspection said that they feel well supported.

The registered manager is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses. There is a development plan in place to support the progress of the home. Weaknesses that are identified are acted on, but not in a timely manner. There is a lack of on-site support from the responsible individual. This is a missed opportunity to swiftly

address weaknesses in the home, and, along with damage not being repaired promptly, affects the quality of care the children receive.

Staff supervisions are reflective and focus on staff practice. This helps with staff development as it gives them the opportunity to adapt their way of working to better meet the children's needs. The emotional impact the job role has on staff is recognised and access to the clinical team is available for them. This ensures that staff feel valued and supported in their role.

Staff recruitment has not always been safe or robust. References have not always been followed up by the registered manager. This has led to repeated safeguarding incidents, which could have been addressed earlier if prompt action had been taken. This does not promote the safety and well-being of children.

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 damage to property not being repaired in a timely manner.	19 May 2022
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)(i))	19 May 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	19 May 2022
A responsible individual must—	19 May 2022

have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b)) In particular, the responsible individual must demonstrate their management and oversight of the children's home.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(a))	19 May 2022

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: SC066010

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Anthony Nolan

Registered manager: Robert Sharp

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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