

SC066242

Registered provider: Progressive Futures Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

There is currently no registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 May 2023

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.

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

An assurance inspection was completed in October 2022. Serious and widespread concerns were found during this inspection, which led to compliance notices being issued under regulation 12, the protection of children standard; regulation 13, the leadership and management standard; and regulation 14, the care planning standard.

A monitoring visit took place in December 2022. These notices were found to be met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/02/2020	Full	Good
22/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's experiences and progress are adversely affected due to shortfalls in safeguarding practice and leadership and management at the setting.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out. This move was not a positive one as staff were unable to manage the child's complex behaviours. There are currently two children who have recently moved into the home.

Care planning for children is poor. The manager has not sufficiently considered children's individual needs and the impact of children living together. Children do not have clear plans for when they move into or out of the home. Children's care plans did not contain all relevant information. Consequently, staff do not have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and experiences.

Inspectors found that the home environment is not maintained to an acceptable standard of cleanliness. The manager took prompt action to remove graffiti from the staff bedroom door and secure the stair banister when this was highlighted by inspectors. However, children's bedrooms should be personalised. The walls in some of the communal areas are dirty and damaged. Repairs, redecoration and more intense cleaning are required to improve the quality of the home, so that children are living in a suitably homely, hygienic and welcoming family environment.

The manager and staff understand the importance of education for all children. Staff are working with education providers and virtual schools to ensure that one child attends school regularly. Another child, who is not yet in education, is being supported at home to build his English reading and writing skills. He has had the opportunity to visit a local college.

All children are registered with all universal health services. However, the interim manager should ensure that staff consistently liaise with the GP and children's nurse to look at an effective treatment plan for one child in line with his health needs.

Staff actively promote children's equality and diversity. Staff have recently supported a child to explore his cultural needs by speaking to an interpreter to help gain the child's wishes and feelings. Additionally, the child has been shopping for specialist foods and clothing and has visited the local mosque. He enjoyed celebrating and learning about a religious festival.

Children are building relationships with staff. One child said, 'Staff are sound.'

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

Leaders and the manager do not demonstrate that there is a strong and proactive response to managing risk and reducing harm. Safeguarding practices in the home are weak. Staff do not have effective strategies to protect and support children.

Leaders and the manager do not provide staff with sufficient and clear information to help them manage children's risks and vulnerabilities safely and effectively. Significant information about one child's vulnerabilities is not included in their plans. The manager knows about some of the risks in relation to children. However, there are no plans or strategies in place for staff to follow on the risk of self-harm, gangs and weapons such as knives. Inspectors also found that staff do not have plans and strategies to follow to support children to use their mobile phones safely and manage online risks. This places children at risk.

There is a lack of professional curiosity about who children are speaking to on their mobile phones and where additional money is being obtained from. Additionally, managers and staff do not take sufficient action to determine the whereabouts of a child when they are away from home or who they are spending their time with.

Children's behaviour support plans do not contain suitable de-escalation techniques, and there are occasions when the police have been called to help staff manage children's behaviour. This could lead to children being criminalised in the future. Furthermore, one professional said, 'There were occasions when staff were not consistent in their approach to managing a child's behaviour, and at times this caused incidents to escalate.' This does not promote positive behaviour.

Restraint records are unclear and do not contain evidence of debrief with the child in line with regulation. Furthermore, inspectors found that new staff have not received face-to-face training in one specific model of restraint to ensure they are all working with a consistent approach. This is unsafe practice and potentially places children at risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There has been no registered manager in post since May 2022. There is an acting manager in place. However, the management arrangements are unclear and chaotic. As a result, there is a lack of accountability, which has impacted on the stability in the home and led to serious shortfalls in the help and protection of children.

Leaders and the manager do not demonstrate that there is a strong and proactive response to managing risk and reducing harm. Staff do not have clear and consistent strategies in place to reduce risk.

Leaders and managers' oversight, review and evaluation of risk management are poor. Leaders and managers do not review and evaluate strategies in children's risk assessments effectively to ensure that children are safe. Several shortfalls were

identified during the inspection, and these had not previously been identified by leaders and the manager.

Children's records are incomplete and are not consistently signed and dated by the author. Some records do not include accurate information about children.

The manager is not consistently visible in the home. There is no record on the roster of her actual hours worked. This does not demonstrate that she has day-to-day oversight of the home. Other records in the home, such as incident reports, do not contain any management evaluation. As a result, opportunities to reflect and learn from incidents have been missed.

Some professionals report poor communication from the manager and staff and said that they are not informed about significant incidents. This does not demonstrate an effective partnership working approach.

Leaders and the manager are not working in line with their aims and objectives as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Additionally, information written about the model of restraint used in the home was found to be incorrect. This was addressed during the inspection. Despite the manager taking action to amend the document, this remains unclear.

Leaders and the manager do not have effective monitoring and review systems in place. For example, there are no internal systems in place for the auditing of the home, and the last quality of care report has not been sent to the regulator. This limits continuous improvement in the quality of care.

The manager does not ensure that information from multi-agency meetings is included in all children's plans. This contributes to the ineffective overall care planning for all children, as staff cannot support children to reach their full potential.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)) In particular, this relates to the leaders and managers ensuring that the home is clean and that children's bedrooms are personalised. Walls should be clean and in a good state of repair, the stairs carpet should be replaced and the laminate floor should be replaced in the dining area.	14 June 2023
* 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;	14 June 2023

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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	
*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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and	14 June 2023

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(c)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))	
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 arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring they have detailed care plans for all children and plans for children moving in and out of the home.	29 June 2023
The registered person must compile in relation to the children’s home a statement (“the statement of purpose”) which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to—	29 June 2023

a person who works at the home; a child, or a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered; a parent of a child, or a parent of a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered; a child's placing authority; and in the case of a qualifying school, the Secretary of State. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e) (3)(a)(b))	
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))	29 June 2023
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—	29 June 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 keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.

The registered person must ensure that—

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—

the name of the child;

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;

the date, time and location of the use of the measure;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

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) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii)(b) (i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that there is a clear recording system in place for restraints and that any restraint is followed by staff and children debriefs.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	29 June 2023
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; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))	26 June 2023
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. 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; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and	26 June 2023

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").

The registered person must—

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed.

(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a))

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continue to liaise with nurses and GPs to provide clear guidelines to show what the current arrangements are for an agreed treatment medication break for one child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the information that staff record on individual children is factual, and the language used should be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: SC066242

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Progressive Futures Care Limited

Registered provider address: 22 Hoghton Street, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0PG

Responsible individual: Zoe Wilkinson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Judith Birchall, Social Care Inspector

Sally Griffiths, Social Care Inspector

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