

SC066458

Registered provider: Pebbles Care

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately operated. It is registered for up to three children who have been assessed as having emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or mental health disorders. The home offers placements on a short-term, medium-term and long-term basis.

The home has been without a registered manager since 1 April 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection date: 12 January 2022

Date of last inspection: 3 November 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

The home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection in November 2021, the home has sustained effectiveness. It has been a short period of time since the inspection. An acting manager has been appointed and is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted. The manager's action plan and broader aims and aspirations for this home have not been fully implemented, and have yet to make sustained improvements to the overall experiences of children living in the home.

Improvements in the physical appearance of the home are taking place and the home environment no longer presents a risk to children. Staff now demonstrate a better understanding of children's care plans and risk assessments, which means risks to children are better managed since the last inspection. The systems for managing staff and ensuring that training meets the standard set out in the home's statement of purpose are still insufficient. Furthermore, not all the requirements set out in the last inspection have been met. This means that three requirements will be reissued as a result of this interim visit.

Children's care plans contain relevant and up-to-date information. The plans provide a good overview of both historic and current information around the needs and risks to children. This enables staff to have a good understanding of the children and their day-to-day needs. Children's care plans do refer to the future plans for the children, but lack clear next steps to show how these will be achieved. This limits their effectiveness in assisting children's progress and transitions.

Risks to children are mostly well managed. Each child has a risk management plan that is reviewed and updated as risks change. Staff are aware of the risks to individual children in the home and use daily observation records to continually observe and assess risks. However, risk factors around children's access to the internet are not well recorded and inconsistently managed. This means children may be able to access inappropriate materials on their mobile phones.

The physical environment of the home was undergoing some refurbishments on the day of this inspection. Outstanding maintenance tasks identified at the last inspection have been mostly addressed and there are no physical risks to the children in the home environment.

One of the cars used by the home has recently been found to have an expired MOT. This had been identified and rectified at the time of the interim inspection, but it was unclear

how long the MOT had been expired. This does not provide assurances that clear records are maintained in relation to essential maintenance.

Children's views are not consistently well recorded. Children in the home have not directly contributed to their plans, and have not signed to confirm they have seen their plans or know what they contain. Children do not regularly share their views via home meetings or by giving individual feedback. Key-work sessions are not taking place to the standard and frequency suggested in the manager's report. Most key-working sessions are unplanned and do not demonstrate that children thoroughly engage in the discussions. Children's views of the care provided to them are not clearly gathered or understood to enable the provider to shape the care provided.

Children are supported to make healthy meal choices. There is fresh fruit, vegetables and salad available in the home. A weekly meal planner is provided with lots of healthy meals. The number of takeaways consumed has reduced since the last inspection and they have now become an occasional treat rather than a regular weekly feature.

Children are cared for by regular permanent staff who make up the majority of the team and the staff rota. There is still some use of agency staff at times, but this is for night cover and they are accompanied by a permanent member of staff. This ensures that the children are cared for by familiar adults who know them and understand their needs.

The needs of the individual children in the home is not the overarching consideration when planning staffing. Staff work in set teams of two and the rota is prepared months in advance by the provider's head office rather than by the home's manager. The home manager then has to arrange local shift swaps, if necessary, to manage staff absence or to ensure that a key worker is available for special occasions or sensitive events. The set team of two systems also makes it more difficult to ensure a consistent model of care and for all staff to meet regularly together. There is still a lack of consistency in relation to the management of persistent behaviours by children.

The system for managing staff supervision is insufficient. Although the action plan states that a supervision timetable is in place, this is based on ticking the staff rota and is not a clearly managed system. Supervision that has taken place is not always typed up and given to staff. This means staff do not always have a record of the discussion or clarity about follow-up actions.

Since the last inspection, all permanent staff have completed their mandatory training. Use of the electronic HR management system is supporting this, although not all staff have yet submitted all their training certificates. Leaders and managers have not delivered training in the model of care set out in the home's statement of purpose and, therefore, staff are not using one consistent method of delivering care and supporting children.

The acting manager has completed a six-monthly review of the care provided in the home and has identified similar shortfalls to those found at the last inspection. An action plan to address the requirements is in place. Most of these actions are in progress, but

are not sufficiently embedded to ensure that there is consistency across the whole home and staff team. Management systems are not sufficiently robust to enable the manager to be assured that the quality of care for children is of a consistent good quality.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2018	Full	Good
05/12/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/11/2016	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Requirement	Due date
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; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; 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)(d)(h)) This is a repeated requirement.	1 April 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This is a repeated requirement.	1 April 2022
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;	1 April 2022

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b))

This is a repeated requirement.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff help children understand who they are and where they come from. This is recognised in good social work practice, for example through undertaking life-story work or other direct work. Staff in children's homes should play a full role in work of this kind. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: SC066458

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pebbles Care

Registered provider address: 2 Wyther Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS5 3BT

Responsible individual: Amanda Quinn

Registered manager: Vacant post

Inspector

Louise Hollick Social Care Inspector

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