

SC066916

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2011.

At the time of the inspection, there was one child living at the home.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
15/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
16/01/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children have left this home since the last full inspection. Staff tried hard to engage these children with positive activities. However, this had a limited impact and staff were not able to support the children to reduce the amount of time they were missing from the home.

There is currently one child living at the home. He is making good progress in all aspects of his life. This is confirmed by his social worker who said, 'He is very settled and staff have very quickly built good relationships with him.' The child told the inspector that he liked all the staff and he felt that he could talk to any of them if he was worried about anything.

The child benefits from a wide range of activities in the local community. Staff actively promote his hobbies and interests. In addition, the child enjoys spending time with staff in the home, playing games such as chess. A recommendation is made that staff should keep, and encourage the child to keep, appropriate memorabilia of time spent living at the home. This would help to capture special memories and help the child to reflect on their history.

The child is growing in confidence. Staff are helping him to learn skills that support him to be more independent. For example, he is learning how to cook and how to budget when shopping. Furthermore, staff have supported the child to find work experience in a library. This is supporting the child to learn about the world of work as well as promoting his independence.

Staff support the child to adopt good daily routines. Prior to living at this home, the child had experienced difficulties with sleeping. However, staff have established a consistent routine to help the child to settle at bedtime. As a result, the child no longer experiences difficulties sleeping.

The child attends school regularly. Staff understand the progress he is making with his education and the additional support he requires to succeed. They ensure there are opportunities for the child to read with them every day. Staff have sourced books that engage and interest him and this encourages the child to read for enjoyment.

The child's care plan is individualised and the child is encouraged to contribute to it. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the child's needs and the strategies they should use to support him effectively. However, some shortfalls with care planning standards were identified. For example, a copy of the placing authority's care plan was not available on the child's records. In addition, the provider's care plan did not contain all the details of the strategies staff are using to support the child. For example, important details about the child's bedtime routine are not recorded. A requirement is made to address this.

Improvements have been made to the decor and furnishing of the home. In addition, staff have been provided with adequate private space in which to sleep. However, there are locks on the doors of some communal areas. This detracts from the homely environment. Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. A recommendation is made to address this.

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

The child currently living at this home receives a high level of supervision and support. This is in line with his assessed needs and helps to keep him safe and protected from harm.

Following the last inspection, the manager took swift action to improve safeguarding arrangements in the home. For example, there are new procedures in place for staff to follow if a child goes missing. This helps to ensure that staff take co-ordinated and consistent action to locate the child. On their return to the home, children are always offered an interview by an independent person.

The manager escalates her concerns to the local authority about the risks children are potentially exposed to when they are missing from home. In addition, she works closely with the police to share information and to help minimise the risks of children going missing.

The manager has taken steps to improve children's risk management plans and staff's understanding of them. Plans are individualised and contain clear instructions for staff. However, details of strategies that staff are using to support the child in the community are not captured within the child's plan. A recommendation is made to ensure children's risk management plans are kept under review and updated accordingly. On one occasion, staff did not follow a child's risk management plan. The manager took quick action to investigate what happened and to address it with staff.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's behaviours and the strategies they should use to support them. There have not been any incidents where staff have used physical interventions to manage children's behaviours.

The manager ensures that robust checks are in place when recruiting new staff. This helps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited. All staff receive training to support their understanding of how to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has responded positively to the shortfalls identified at the last full inspection. She has prioritised making changes to improve safeguarding arrangements in the home. For example, the manager has reviewed the home's procedures in relation to safeguarding children. Staff have clear guidance about their

roles and responsibilities. In addition, the manager has ensured that staff understand these new procedures by reinforcing them in individual supervision sessions and team meetings.

Additional training has been provided to the staff team. This training is aligned to the needs of the child living at the home. Furthermore, staff are encouraged to reflect on their learning and think about how they will put this into practice. Staff value this training and say that it helps them to support vulnerable children. However, the manager was not able to locate some records of staff training. This hampers her ability to ensure that staff complete essential training within timescales. A recommendation is made to improve this.

The manager has introduced a new monitoring system to help her to understand the quality of care provided to children at the home. By undertaking more regular monitoring checks, the manager has much greater oversight of events in the home. This is supporting her to identify areas for improvement and to take action to address them. However, the manager has not submitted her review of the quality of care provided for children to Ofsted within the required timescale. In addition, she has not ascertained and considered the views of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff in the production of this report. A requirement is made to address this.

The home's statement of purpose contains some inaccurate and out-of-date information. The manager has not taken sufficient action to address the requirement made in relation to this at the last full inspection. Therefore, this requirement is repeated.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(c))	4 December 2022
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— 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) (3)(a)(b)) This relates to ensuring that the statement of purpose describes the staffing structure of the home and the arrangements in place for caring for children at night. In addition, the statement of purpose should be updated with the details of the current staff team.	4 December 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—	4 December 2022

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

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.

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 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a) (5))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff keep, and encourage children to keep, appropriate memorabilia of time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children are able to access all shared areas of their home. Locks on the doors of shared areas should be removed unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the strategies staff use to safeguard children are recorded in the child's risk assessment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a robust internal system in place to record staff training and highlight when refresher training for staff is due.

(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: SC066916

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Not applicable

Registered provider address: Not applicable

Responsible individual: Not applicable

Registered manager: Elaine Cooke

Inspector

Sophie Thomson, Social Care Inspector

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