

SC067839

Registered provider: Future in Mind Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. The home provides care for up to two children who have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex emotional and social difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2022. At the time of this inspection, she had resigned from her post and was due to leave at the end of March 2023.

Inspection date: 13 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 3 August 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.

Inspectors have 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

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection. No children have moved in or out of the home since the last inspection.

Children living at the home make good progress. Risks have reduced for one child, resulting in a deprivation of liberty safeguards order being removed. Another child's positive progress means plans are being progressed for him to return to live with his family.

Children are supported and encouraged by staff to attend education. A school place has been obtained for one child who has been out of school for some time. Both children attend school regularly and staff work well with education staff. This supports children's educational progress.

The physical, emotional and health needs of each child are identified and appropriate action is taken to make sure that children receive the support that they need. They are helped to address any emotional difficulties they experience, including receiving support from the organisation's therapist. Children are confident to ask for additional support if they feel they need this.

Overall, the home provides a comfortable environment for children to live in. Home improvements continue. Areas of the home have been redecorated and a new kitchen has been fitted. However, the blind in one child's bedroom had broken and been removed. At the time of the inspection, the child had been without a blind in her bedroom for a week.

Children have trusted relationships with staff. When children share their personal needs and experiences, staff respond in a sensitive and supportive way. Children have a range of opportunities to share their views, and staff use creative approaches to help them to reflect on their progress and future goals. One child has made so much progress in talking about how she feels that it has enabled her to write a letter to help staff understand her feelings and responses.

The safety of children

The children's individual risk assessments provide staff with guidance on how to reduce and manage children's risks and vulnerabilities. The manager worked closely with a child's social worker to develop a risk management plan when the child was assessed as no longer needing a deprivation of liberty safeguards order. This

enabled staff to prepare for an increase in the child's independence while balancing this carefully against identified risks.

Since the last inspection, managers have provided upskilling sessions to support staff to understand and respond to children's behaviours. This is promoting positive relationships as staff understand children's needs better. Because staff respond to children with empathy, nurture and understanding there has been a decrease in incidents in the home.

Incidents of children going missing from home have reduced. Staff have access to detailed information which describes what action they must take if children do go missing. Staff are proactive and maintain contact with the relevant professionals and look for children in the local area. This helps to keep children safer.

One child has risks of self-harm. Because staff understand the child well, they are able to identify changes in the child's behaviour and use their curiosity to prevent incidents. Continuity of care from familiar staff has enabled the child to build trust and feel comfortable in talking more openly about her thoughts and feelings. As a result, the child is beginning to explore other ways of managing difficult feelings, and incidents of self-harm have reduced.

When children have needed to be restrained, the quality of incident records has improved. Children receive a timely opportunity to talk about what has happened and are responded to with nurture and care. The manager ensures that she has oversight of these incidents and there is a focus on repairing relationships.

Children are not always supervised as outlined in risk assessments. Senior managers held a team meeting in the home and decided to leave one child unsupervised in her bedroom. At the time, the child's vulnerability was increased as external contractors were in and out of the home. This provided an opportunity for the child to leave the home unsupervised and without staff knowing. Managers took effective action when they became aware the child was missing from home. However, the incident led to additional emotional distress for the child which resulted in a physical intervention. Managers have reflected on decision-making and learned from this incident. The child's safety was compromised on this occasion because managers and staff were not alert to potential risk and became complacent.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The child-focused registered manager has worked hard to improve standards of care since the last inspection. Six of the eight requirements raised at the last inspection have been met. The manager has now resigned and a new manager has been identified internally, to support consistency and continuity for children and staff working in the home.

There is a stable team of staff who are committed to achieving positive outcomes for children. Staff say that they are well supported by the manager and their colleagues. This sense of being a team helps the children to receive consistent care.

Supervision sessions and team meetings are used as opportunities for reflection and staff development.

There have been improvements in monitoring, review and quality assurance systems. The manager has completed quality of care reports in line with regulation. However, shortfalls are not always identified and acted on in a timely manner. For example, one child requested an advocate six months ago. He still does not have an advocate and delays have gone unchallenged. In addition, one parent raised concerns about communication and information-sharing. This has not been followed up by manager or staff.

When there have been incidents involving children, records are not always clear. This means that there are gaps in the narrative about children's experiences and the support they receive. The manager does not always pick up on these shortfalls. This results in missed opportunities for reflective and developmental discussions to improve care and support provided to children.

Safer recruitment practice has improved since the last inspection. However, recording was poor on one recruitment record, and it was not clear if managers had ensured all the relevant checks had been carried out in relation to one member of staff's time living and working abroad.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/07/2021	Full	Good
17/12/2019	Full	Good
01/08/2018	Full	Outstanding

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 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)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that children's risk assessments are followed consistently. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	24 April 2023
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— 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; 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)(e)(f)(h))	24 April 2023

In particular, ensure that the manager monitors, reviews and evaluates the quality of care to ensure that shortfalls are identified and rectified quickly. This includes responding to feedback from external stakeholders.

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's needs are met in a homely domestic environment. This specifically relates to ensuring that the blind in a child's bedroom is replaced. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should maintain good employment practice to minimise potential risks to children from unsuitable people caring for them. This specifically relates to robust recruitment checks when potential employees have spent time living and working abroad. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC067839

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Future In Mind Limited

Registered provider address: Future In Mind, 65 Market Street, Hednesford, Cannock, Staffordshire WS12 1AD

Responsible individual: Carly Adams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Natasha Skinner, Social Care Inspector

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