

SC371723

Registered provider: Educare Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The current manager has worked for the company since April 2019. She is currently undertaking her level 5 qualification in leadership and management and has over 10 years' experience.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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: 9 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/07/2018	Full	Inadequate
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Good

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 health and well-being standard is that children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1)(c))	31/08/2019
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful. (Regulation 11 (1)(a–c)(2)(a)(vi))	31/08/2019
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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	31/08/2019
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which— is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of all allegation of abuse or neglect. The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular— provide for liaison and co-operation with any local authority, which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home; provide for records to be kept of an allegation and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(d))	31/08/19
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or	31/08/2019

restraint in relation to a child in the home a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use 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 (3)(a)(iii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay. (Regulation 40 (4))	31/08/2019

Recommendation

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

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

Staff do not always provide children with healthy and balanced meals. In addition, children are not well informed about healthy eating. This means that staff do not fully promote children's health and well-being.

Children know how to complain. However, complaints are not always handled sensitively. This does not help children to feel that their views are valued and taken seriously.

Key-working continues to be variable in quality. Staff do not consistently provide children with sufficient opportunity to talk to staff about their views, wishes and feelings or explore issues such as sexual health. As a result, it is not always clear that children are listened to and supported to understand potential risks to their health and safety.

The home is well maintained, and children have been able to have an input into decisions about home improvements. This means that children are being given the

opportunity to add personal touches to the home, and they reside in a homely environment.

Children enjoy living at the home and feel safe. For example, a child told the inspector that they are happy living at the home and they also have the opportunity to undertake lots of activities with staff. This demonstrates that children are able to form positive relationships with staff and are provided with opportunities to socialise within the wider community.

Children have access to independent advocacy. They are, therefore, able to speak to someone outside of the home about any worries they may have in relation to their care plan.

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

Staff use some good behaviour management strategies to de-escalate children's challenging behaviour. However, on occasions physical intervention is required to keep children safe. When restraint incidents occur, children do not always have the opportunity to speak to someone who is independent, to explore their feelings about what has happened. In addition, some records are not completed fully by staff. This does not allow the manager to have full oversight of restraint incidents, to ensure that they are always handled safely and are proportionate.

Staff do not always follow procedures for responding to concerns about children's safety. On one occasion, when a child made a disclosure, staff did not share this promptly with the placing authority. Although the matter was subsequently investigated, details of the actions taken and the outcome were not clearly recorded by the manager. The delay in reporting concerns had the potential to place a child at risk of harm. A lack of detailed records means that there is not a clear audit trail of significant events kept at the home.

On one occasion, an incident in the home was not promptly reported to Ofsted in line with regulation. This leaves the regulator without essential information by which to monitor how effectively managers respond to and learn from serious incidents that occur.

When children go missing, staff respond appropriately. They take action to try to locate the young person, liaise with the relevant agencies and ensure that children have the opportunity to talk to an independent person following their return to the home. This good practice promotes children's safety.

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

The current manager commenced employment with the organisation in April 2019. Although relatively new to the role, the manager understands the home's strengths and weaknesses and is beginning to take some steps to improve the quality of care provided to children. However, this is work in progress.

Monitoring and review systems are not yet wholly effective. This means that some shortfalls are not identified quickly, and this limits the capacity of the home to improve quickly.

There have been several changes to the staff team, and efforts are ongoing to recruit new staff. The provider does use agency staff to cover shortfalls in the rota. However, wherever possible the manager uses the same agency staff, which provides children with continuity of care and consistency.

Staff receive regular supervision and training. This means that staff receive regular feedback on their practice and have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge to help support children better.

Some aspects of record-keeping require improvement to ensure that they are written sensitively and in child-friendly language. This is so that, should children wish to read their records now or in later life, they are clear and easy to understand.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC371723

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Educare Adolescent Services Limited

Registered provider address: Venture House, 12 Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Tina Morten

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Junor-Fitzpatrick, social care inspector

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