

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 young people aged between eight and 17 years old, who have social and emotional difficulties.

The home has been without a registered manager since November 2017. Since this time, temporary management arrangements have been in place. The current manager has worked for the company since June 2018. He has obtained his level 5 qualification in leadership and management and has over 15 years of residential experience.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 July 2018

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 widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded. The care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 23 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Good
15/09/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
21/07/2015	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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))	09/09/2018
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 staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any	09/09/2018

experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv)(v)(vi))	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. Ensures that each child knows what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision. (Regulation 7 (1)(c)(2)(a)(ii)(iv)(b)(iii))	09/09/2017
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; and help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(viii)(ix))	09/09/2018
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on helping 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; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;	09/09/2018

are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii)(x))	
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 plan, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi))	09/09/2018
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 ensure that staff have the experiences, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(d)(h))	09/09/2018
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (a) applies to the home the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. In particular, ensure that all new members of staff undertake relevant fire safety training and are aware of the fire evacuation procedures in the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))	09/09/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(3)(d))	09/09/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees—receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and	09/09/2018

have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that 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. 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)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(i))	09/09/2018
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))	09/09/2018
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (1)(3))	09/09/2018
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	09/09/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Young people's overall experience and progress is inadequate. Staff do not provide young people with personalised care or support. For example, staff do not ensure that internal care plans reflect the aims and objectives set by the placing authority or show how young people make progress. Consequently, young people's progress has been poor.

Despite staff being aware of young people's cultural differences, they fail to promote diversity in practice. For example, during a house meeting young people made a request for more varied food that reflected their cultural heritage. This request was not actioned by the staff. This has left young people without the opportunity to celebrate some aspects of their culture. Furthermore, one young person had asked the staff to make her an appointment at a hair salon so that she could have her hair styled in line with her cultural heritage. The young person has been waiting several months and still has not

had an appointment arranged. This significant delay has resulted in the young person's hair becoming unmanageable and this has caused her significant distress.

Staff fail to ensure that key-working sessions regularly take place. This means that young people are not provided with the opportunity to express their views, wishes and feelings or to receive ongoing support to address their risk-taking behaviour.

Young people are not happy in the home. For example, one young person told the inspector that living at the home was 'annoying and depressing'.

Staff do not encourage the young people to participate in activities or provide suggestions to stimulate young people's interests. This leaves young people bored and isolated.

Not all young people are aware of their right to advocacy. This means that young people are unaware that they can seek independent support to help them to raise issues about their care.

Young people who are approaching adulthood do not receive the support needed to develop their life-skills to be well prepared for independent living.

Young people's complaints are not addressed or recorded appropriately. This compromises the young people's rights to raise concerns over the quality of their care.

When young people have been unable to access any formal education provision, staff do not provide a structured routine in the home. They fail to help young people to access alternative learning resources and educational support. This means that young people do not receive the help they need to achieve academic success.

Staff do not work with external health services to promote young people's emotional health. As a result, young people miss out on getting the help they need in line with their care plan.

Staff promote family contact. This helps young people to maintain contact with people who are important to them.

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

There have been a number of serious incidents that have placed young people at risk of harm. These incidents include young people going missing from the home and incidents that have required the staff to call the police for help. These serious incidents have not been reported to Ofsted in line with regulation. This leaves the regulator without essential information about how serious incidents in the home are managed.

Staff only use physical restraint as a last resort and instead use de-escalation. However, when physical restraint is necessary, staff fail to ensure that young people can talk to someone who was not involved in the incident. Furthermore, managers do not scrutinise

the records made by staff. This significantly compromises managerial oversight of staff practice.

Staff do not appropriately assess young people's individual risks or put in place effective strategies to reduce and manage these risks. For example, staff took one young person on an activity, but failed to assess her risks of going missing. This poor planning resulted in the young person going missing for several days and being placed at risk of significant harm.

Staff give little thought and understanding to the necessity of partnership working to help young people make progress. This lack of engagement means that staff are too slow to secure the help young people need. This has had a significant negative impact on the progress that young people have made during their time at the home.

Staff fail to undertake work with young people to help them recognise the potential consequences of their risk-taking behaviour or to provide support needed to keep themselves safe. For example, all young people living at the home currently have a history of being vulnerable to child sexual exploitation. Despite this being a known risk, staff have failed to undertake any basic work with young people to help them have a better understanding of keeping themselves safe. This means that young people continue to experience unacceptable levels of risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Staff do not receive monthly supervision in line with the home's policy. In addition, some staff have not received annual appraisals. This means that the staff do not receive regular feedback on their practice or have the opportunity to have their performance formally reviewed.

Not all staff receive adequate training to enable them to meet young people's needs. For example, the organisation has adopted the playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy model of care to engage young people and to help them to manage their own emotions and to reduce harmful behaviour. However, only three members of staff have received this training. In addition, not all staff have undertaken training in fire safety and health and safety. This leaves staff without essential knowledge in keeping young people safe.

Managers have monitoring systems in place to evaluate and assess the quality of care. However, current systems do not include consultation with young people or other professionals. This is a missed opportunity to seek the views and opinions of stakeholders to inform and improve service delivery.

Since the last inspection, agency staff have been used to cover staff shortages. This has left young people without the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with people they can grow to trust and respect.

Managers fail to ensure that suitable recruitment checks for agency workers are carried

out. This failure to undertake adequate checks has left young people's safety compromised.

The home has been without a registered manager for over 26 weeks. This lack of consistent leadership has compromised the continuity and quality of care that young people receive. However, a new manager has now been employed and is beginning to have a positive impact on the service and on the quality of care. Managers have made the decision to not admit any new young people at present. A detailed action plan has been sent to Ofsted and this has helped to mitigate many of the concerns identified.

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: Liz Moran

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Junor-Fitzpatrick, social care inspector

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