

Children's homes - monitoring

Inspection date	04/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC411030
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Sarah Oldham

This monitoring visit

This unannounced visit was conducted at this home on 04 August 2015 following two notifications and concerns raised with Ofsted in connection with safeguarding the protection and welfare of children; specifically in relation to missing from home and child sexual exploitation.

This visit focussed on children's records, including pre admission planning, placement plans, risk assessments, incident reports, and formal notifications.

A number of breaches in regulations directly impact on the care, safety, welfare, and support of children and young people. Prior to young people's admission to the home, information is gathered from placing authorities. This enables the manager to assess whether the home can meet young people's needs in accordance with the homes Statement of Purpose. This quality of this information varies, resulting in placements, on occasions, made without full analysis of specific care needs and individual risks associated with young people's behaviours assessed. This does not demonstrate robust pre admission planning.

The manager stated the home does not initially develop an in-house placement plan within the first seven days of placement. During this period, the home uses the placing authority's care and placement plan. Although these plans identify individual young people's needs, they do not address clearly how the home will meet them.

The home's initial risk assessments are not robust. An example of this includes missing from home and morning welfare risk assessments developed from a generic template, which identifies the lack of personalisation of specific needs by referring to some young people in the wrong gender. This does not ensure that staff are provided with a comprehensive overview and understanding of specific procedures to follow for individual young people to safeguard and minimise risks. Additional risks, identified on information provided by a placing authority, are not incorporated within appropriate care planning. Specifically, risk assessments providing clear intervention strategies to manage all identified risks. This can potentially impact on the overall safety and welfare of young people.

Not all staff have an understanding of the circumstances and action they can take to safeguard young people who may be putting themselves at risk of injury by leaving the home. This includes arrangements to meet someone who is sexually exploiting them or intends to do so. This further underpins the need for effective person centred care planning and risk assessments to ensure cohesive delivery of individualised care.

The home has not notified, in a timely manner, the local authority which the home is located within, of every admission and discharge of a child as required by regulation. This does not enable the local authority to have full oversight and

understanding of the needs of the young people within the area, specifically those who may need additional services or support.

Action is required to address the breaches in regulations and the shortfalls in practice, to ensure support provided to children enables them to achieve positive outcomes through effective care planning that promotes their safety and well-being.

Information about this children's home

- This is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to three children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose standard with particular reference to children's welfare the registered person must - (2) (b) (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare.	31/08/2015
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard with particular reference to keeping children safe and enabling them to keep themselves safe, the registered person must- (2) (a) ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of harm to the child; (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare (2) (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively	31/08/2015

from harm.	
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person, enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that - (1) (b) promote their welfare.	31/08/2015
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard with particular reference to ensuring that children receive care that is well-planned the registered person must ensure- (2) (b) that arrangements are in place to (ii) manage and review the placement of children in the home (2) (c) that each child's relevant plans are followed (2) (e) that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, when (i) the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet his or her needs; (ii) the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission.	31/08/2015
41: Notification with respect to children admitted into, or discharged from, a children's home The registered person must notify, without delay, the local authority for the area in which the children's home is located of every admission of a child into the home and every discharge of a child from the home (Regulation 41 (1))	31/08/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns

for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5)

- Where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a children's home placement, their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked-after, their care plan should include such a strategy. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45, paragraph 9.24)
- Ensure staff understand there may be circumstances where a child can be prevented from leaving a home - for example a child who is putting themselves at risk of injury by leaving the home. Any such measures of restraint should be proportionate. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 48, paragraph 9.52)
- Ensure that in a restraint situation, staff use their professional judgement, supported by their knowledge of each child's risk assessment, an understanding of the needs of the child and an understanding of the risks the child faces (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 48, paragraph 9.53)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of the visit was to monitor how well the home protects and safeguards children and young people. This followed concerns and significant safeguarding notifications being made to Ofsted in relation to the safety and welfare of children and young people.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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