

SC423617

Registered provider: Ade cyn Children's Homes Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager since June 2022. The interim manager has been in post since 27 June 2024.

Inspection date: 26 November 2024

Date of last inspection: 9 October 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors 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 identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- Leaders and managers have failed to intervene effectively to upskill staff to ensure that children are safe.
- Staff responses and management of significant incidents when children are unsafe are inadequate.
- Ineffective management oversight of the operation of the home and children's care.
- Lack of support and supervision for staff.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home. Since the previous inspection, no children have moved out of the home and no children have moved in. All children were spoken to during the inspection.

The inspectors found significant shortfalls in safeguarding practice and in the leadership and management of the home.

Staff responses and management of significant incidents when children are unsafe are inadequate. Staff do not assess situations or children's vulnerabilities safely. They fail to recognise situations where children may be at risk of harm. Staff do not take appropriate action to safeguard children at these times.

Senior staff fail to provide for the safe care of children living in the home. A senior staff member left the home for the day with a child. This was despite there being incidents in the home the day before. The staff member did not ensure that there were adequate arrangements in place to support less experienced staff while they were gone. During this time a serious incident occurred. During the same evening, the senior member of staff failed to follow management instructions and left the home again. This left children being cared for by unfamiliar, inexperienced and unskilled staff.

During one incident, a child left the home and ran into a main road. Staff followed, however, they did not have the knowledge or skill to respond to this incident safely. The staff called the on-call manager to ask if they should physically intervene. This caused delay in the member of staff acting to keep the child safe. When staff eventually did physically intervene, this was unsuccessful. The child was able to run into the main road again, where passing cars had to stop.

In the same incident, one member of staff failed to follow the child's care plan. The child should be cared for by two staff at all times. However, one member of staff left the scene, leaving the other member of staff alone with the child. The staff were unable to safely de-escalate the incident. Members of the public also intervened and

called the police. The child then ran home, and police attended the home. The child has a known fear of the police and was extremely frightened and distressed. The incident had been triggered by the child overhearing staff disagreeing about their care.

The staff involved in this incident did not accurately record the detail of events. The manager had not reviewed the incident record. This was despite being aware of staff feeling anxious afterwards. The manager had held a debrief with the child but did not record this. The manager has since arranged for staff to receive training in physical intervention. However, this is to reflect on this specific incident only and does not support staff to develop their understanding and skills to respond to different risks. In addition, the child's risk management strategies were not promptly updated.

Not all staff understand children's needs or how to respond to them. They do not recognise and respond to increased risk in relation to the environment. For example, staff allowed an incident between two children to escalate on the stairs. This resulted in one child harming the other and a child sustaining a head injury.

Since the previous inspection, a child with significant vulnerability has gone missing twice. There is a missing-from-care protocol in place. During one incident, there was some delay in staff reporting the child as missing to the police. The records of action taken to maintain contact with the child do not give a clear understanding of the action staff did or did not take. In one case, there was no record of staff talking to the child when they returned home. The next day, the child disclosed to the manager that they had been physically assaulted while they were missing. The manager reported this to the child's placing authority. The failure to speak to the child on their return resulted in a delay in this serious concern being identified and acted on.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that staff receive adequate training. Training provided to staff has been ineffective. Systems in place to monitor the quality of training and staff practice are poor. Staff are not helped to develop or improve their practice. Some staff do not understand children's complex needs. This means that children continue to receive poor care.

Children's bedrooms do not provide a comfortable and nurturing space for them. One child's bedroom remains cluttered, and their bed is broken, although the manager has now ordered them a new one. This child has been assessed by the provider to be at high risk of self-harm, yet they had not risk assessed their bedroom. There are items in their bedroom which could pose a risk to them. This is because they are not being helped to process and manage their feelings safely.

Some staff feel that they have to heavily support other staff in their roles. They also feel that there are not enough competent staff to ensure that children receive good care and are always kept safe.

The home has not had a registered manager since June 2022. There is a manager currently overseeing the home. However, he is registered to manage another of this provider's children's homes and does not intend to apply to register for this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/06/2024	Full	Inadequate
10/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/11/2022	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, The 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 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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(vii)(viii)(c)(i)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's bedrooms are safe, nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of children.	6 January 2025
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—	6 January 2025

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— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's views, wishes and feelings about how they are cared for are routinely ascertained. They must ensure that children's views are taken seriously and responded to and that any action taken ensures that children feel listened to. In addition, children must be supported to understand and process their feelings of loss due to staff leaving. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
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—	6 January 2025

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;

communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

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;

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;

strive to gain each child's respect and trust;

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;

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;

de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;

understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and

have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and

that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)(xii)(xiii)(b)) The registered person must ensure that staff have the skills to promote positive relationships between children. They must ensure that staff are good role models for children. In addition, they must address promptly any behaviour by children which could be harmful.	
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; 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 from harm; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded;	6 January 2025

that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; and

that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(c)(d)(e))

In particular, the registered person must ensure a consistent approach to ensuring children's safety. They must ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities to protect children, and take action to protect children from harm. This includes acting promptly and effectively when there are concerns about the performance of staff.

The registered person must ensure that children's risk assessments contain information about all known risks. They must accurately identify risks and strategies to mitigate them.

Staff must follow the guidance in children's risk assessments to keep children safe.

The registered person must ensure that they speak to all children living in the home after incidents occur, to ascertain their views, wishes and feelings. They must ensure that children's views of their experiences are listened to and that action is taken to ensure they are adequately supported.

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

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—

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;

6 January 2025

ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;

ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;

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;

demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

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)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that children receive consistent care by a cohesive staff team. They must ensure that staff receive effective training to upskill and equip them with the knowledge and understanding to meet children's needs. They must also have effective systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of training.

The registered person must ensure that the quality of care children receive is continuously monitored. This includes developing consistent and effective monitoring and review systems which include consulting with children about their experiences.

In addition, the registered person must have appropriate systems in place to monitor staff performance when there are known concerns. This includes taking effective action when necessary, in children's best interests.

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(a)(c)) In particular, ensure that an application is made to register a manager so that the regulator is able to consider the person's experience, qualifications and skills to determine the suitability of the home's management arrangements.	6 January 2025
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b)) The person appointed as the responsible individual must have adequate oversight of the home and staff's practice. In addition, they must have the skills to take effective action to improve the quality of care children receive.	6 January 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) The registered person must ensure that each member of staff receives regular supervision. This must include reflection on staff practice and performance-related issues.	6 January 2025

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)) The registered person must ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording which is non-stigmatising.	6 January 2025
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff receive in-depth training and upskilling in relation to the home's recording systems. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC423617

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ade cyn Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 9 Summerfield Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV1 4PR

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector
Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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