

SC429995

Registered provider: A Significant Other Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children who are aged between 8 and 18 years and of any gender identity.

The home registered in July 2011. The manager has been registered since December 2017.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 8 December 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 September 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/10/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/12/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/04/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children like living here. A child who recently left said, 'Thank you to all staff for making my time here amazing. There would not be a part of it I would have changed for the world.'

Staff understand the individual needs and abilities of the children. Staff undertake relevant training and keep up to date with information and decisions about each child. This means that children receive responses and support which are consistent and appropriate to their needs. One family member commented that, 'Staff had no experience of working with someone with such complex needs. They have now become very efficient.'

Staff look for creative ways to divert children's anti-social and challenging behaviour. For example, exercise equipment has been bought and is regularly used by the children. This has also improved children's physical and emotional health by increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

Children are encouraged by the staff to value their education and understand how it will benefit them. All children attend school, which is progress for some. Others achieve qualifications and certificates, which is progress for them. This means that when children move on, they are better able to continue learning or gain employment.

Children's views are important, and they are sought regularly. Children's meetings take place and questionnaires are given to them every month. All requests made by the children are acknowledged and actioned where this is possible. This helps children to feel listened to, valued and involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

Children are supported well to take part in a range of activities. Staff seek out new and interesting opportunities for children so that children can experience activities that they have not done before.

The exterior and interior of the home are unkempt and tired in parts. There is also mould in some of the children's bedrooms and not all are clean. This does not provide for a welcoming or homely environment.

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

Children are helped to become increasingly safe. Staff follow children's up-to-date risk assessments, and complete key-work sessions with children. This helps children to talk and learn about the risks that are associated with some of their behaviours. This approach has resulted in a reduction in children engaging in risk-taking

behaviours, such as going missing from the home, engaging in substance misuse, and being drawn into child criminal exploitation.

Staff know what to do when children go missing from the home. They follow the individualised missing-from-home procedures and actively look for children. This reduces the time children are away from the home which makes children safer. Staff are proactive in making sure independent return home interviews are arranged. This means that any safeguarding concerns can be addressed and escalated if necessary.

Professionals are confident that children are safe in this home. Communication is described by one professional as 'fantastic'. Staff maintain weekly contact with social workers and whenever there is a safeguarding concern. This results in a well-coordinated response to any issues.

Children's behaviour is managed well. Staff build respectful relationships with children and understand their triggers. The staff successfully use de-escalation techniques when children are in crisis. This helps children learn how to regulate their behaviours. As a result, the last physical restraint was 18 months ago.

Staff understand the importance of specialist support for children. When a service is identified for a child, the staff pursue this to make sure the intervention takes place. This means that children's complex needs can be addressed by the most skilled professionals.

The manager and staff respond swiftly to safeguarding incidents. They put appropriate safeguards in place to reduce the risks, such as waking-night staff and door alarms. However, additional safety measures, such as room searches, are not always carried out. This oversight prevents the manager from being fully aware of all the potential risks that children may be exposed to and prevents him from taking effective action to reduce the risks.

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

The manager undertakes a comprehensive impact risk assessment before any child moves into the home. This involves consulting with all relevant professionals, including the provider's own psychologist. This means that children only move into the home when it does not increase their risks or the risks of those children already living in the home.

The manager has good monitoring systems in place so that he and the staff know what is happening in the home. As a result, the manager has a clear understanding of the progress that children make. However, the staff do not sign their entries in the daily records which means there is a lack of accountability.

The manager and the staff do not always record sanctions. This is because they are not recognised as such. This affects children being able to understand and learn from their behaviour. In addition, this oversight prevents the manager from

identifying any patterns in behaviour and ensuring that the sanctions used are fair, proportionate and effective.

Staff receive support from the manager through supervision and an open-door policy. One staff member said, 'Managers are always on hand to give guidance and support.' Staff also talked about having 'an amazing staff team who pull together and understand each other'.

Staff recruitment processes are generally good. However, one file indicates that a member of staff was recruited without taking account of all known information. This resulted in an insufficient risk assessment. In addition, new staff do not always have experience or training in residential childcare. This means that children are cared for by some staff who do not have the required level of skills and knowledge.

'The independent person's reports are not shared, which are completed by the independent person, are not shared with Ofsted in a timely manner. This prevents Ofsted from reviewing the progress that the provider is making with improving the experiences and safeguarding arrangements for children.'

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 registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b))	18 October 2021
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c))	18 October 2021
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.	18 October 2021

The registered person must ensure that—

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—

the name of the child;

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;

the date, time and location of the use of the measure;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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 (1)(b) (2)

(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's homes is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children, and that it is a homely, domestic environment. This relates to the external and internal painting. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children's bedrooms can be searched where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered provider should ensure that regulation 44 reports are sent to Ofsted by the end of the month following the month of the visit. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC429995

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: A Significant Other Limited

Registered provider address: 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

Responsible individual: David Hitchen

Registered manager: Simon Morson

Inspectors

Sue Atkinson-Millmoor, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

Emma Ridley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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