

SC438427

Registered provider: MGM Care Services Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a small, privately run home for two children with social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2011.

Inspection date: 25 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 6 February 2024

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has 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 serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care and/or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

No children have lived in the home since the last inspection. The last child left the home in July 2023 and no new children have been admitted since. As a result, we were unable to assess the standard of care that children receive in the home.

The home environment is not safe. The house has undergone some redecoration since the last inspection and provides a clean, simply decorated environment for children to live in. While the home is generally in good condition, some of the windows require new glass due to issues with the double glazing. The exterior of the property has not been well maintained while the home has been empty, and there are weeds and rubbish that need clearing from the garden to make it more welcoming. The garden presents some potential risks to children who may live in the home. There is an old greenhouse with a broken door, a wooden pond cover is partly rotted and the external door from the house is damaged. All of these pose a risk to children, particularly those who are at risk of self-harm.

The home does not have sufficient staff to care for a child. Currently there are only two staff members, including the manager. While the manager is taking steps to recruit new staff, these people are still progressing through recruitment checks and have no proposed start date. The manager is seeking to rely on casual staff who are currently working elsewhere or agency staff if a child is admitted. This would not offer children the stability and consistency they would need.

The manager has failed to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and experience to meet children's needs. Some training courses were completed several years ago and have not been updated. These include important training on learning disabilities and online safety. Furthermore, staff have not completed training on trauma, exploitation or the management of self-harm, and only one staff member has up-to-date first-aid training. This lack of training means that staff are lacking important knowledge on how to meet children's needs and keep children safe.

Staff have completed conflict management training which includes de-escalation and physical intervention. However, the manager is very clear that they will not use restraint under any circumstances. While his commitment not to use physical intervention is positive, in reality staff still need to be confident and willing to use restraint as a last resort when children pose a significant risk to themselves, others or property. Having a blanket policy of no restraint may leave children at risk if staff do not intervene when needed.

The home has a statement of purpose which sets out the model of care that is provided and the staff in the home. This has not been kept up to date and the staffing details are incorrect. In addition, the document states that the home will provide therapeutic care and that all children will have a pre-admission assessment

completed by the manager and the home's consultant therapist. The home does not employ a therapist so cannot provide this. Also, neither the manager nor staff have completed any training in this area and there was a lack of understanding about what therapeutic care involves, meaning that they are unable to deliver the model of care that is stated.

The manager has failed to ensure that staff receive regular supervision while the home is empty. Due to the manager and the only other staff member being related, it was decided that an external person would supervise them. The external person is not involved in the home on a day-to-day basis and has no oversight of the staff member's practice. The manager has not taken steps to assure themselves of the person's suitability and experience to supervise staff, and there was a lack of understanding about what a supervision should involve. No supervision sessions have taken place. The manager has been holding team meetings, but records are very brief and show no evidence of discussions covering learning and development or practice.

The manager has ensured that an independent person visits the home on a monthly basis in line with regulations. While the independent person has submitted these reports regularly, their visits have failed to identify the shortfalls that were found during this assurance inspection. The manager must ensure that the independent visitor provides effective oversight of the home and help him to improve the quality of care that the home can provide.

The requirements from the last inspection had been met. However, there were two recommendations that were not able to be tested due to no children having lived in the home and no new staff being employed. These relate to children's documents and ensuring that staff are enrolled on their level 3 diploma in residential childcare at the end of their probation period. As a result, these recommendations have been repeated and will be assessed at the next inspection.

Since the inspection, the manager has worked positively with Ofsted and has given an assurance that no children will be admitted to the home until such time as the required actions have been completed. Having also considered the home's previously positive inspection history, a decision has been made not to take any enforcement action at this time. Progress towards meeting the identified shortfalls will be monitored and assessed through further inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2024	Full	Good
28/02/2023	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Full	Good
23/05/2019	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 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that repairs are promptly made to any damaged items in the home and garden and that the garden area is well maintained.	7 May 2025
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; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff receive training to enable them to provide care in line with	7 May 2025

the home's statement of purpose. It also relates to ensuring that there is a clear plan for training that staff must complete, and that training is refreshed at regular intervals so that staff's knowledge remains current and enables them to meet children's needs. In addition, the manager must ensure that the home has sufficient staff to allow children to have stable, consistent care.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff receive regular, good-quality supervision from a suitably experienced and qualified person who has knowledge of the staff member's practice.	21 May 2025
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b) (5)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the statement of purpose accurately reflects the care that the home can provide. It also relates to ensuring that the document is updated when staff changes occur and that the updated document is shared with Ofsted.	21 May 2025
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—	21 May 2025

to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.

The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—

children are effectively safeguarded; and

the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.
(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that the quality of the independent visits is such that they identify shortfalls in the home environment or practice, and that the information gathered is used to improve the care provided to children.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff are enrolled onto the relevant qualification diploma following a successful probation period. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. Children's case records must be kept for 75 years from the date of birth of the child, or if the child dies before the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of his or her death. In particular, the registered person should ensure that children's key care planning documents are obtained following reviews. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC438427

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: MGM Care Services Ltd

Responsible individual: Mathew Varughese

Registered manager: Mathew Varughese

Inspectors

Vicky Smith, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025