

SC451152

Registered provider: Stanfield Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to four children who are aged between eight and 17 years and have learning disabilities.

The registered manager registered with Ofsted in March 2021 and resigned in May 2021. A manager was appointed in August 2021; she was replaced by another manager in October 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021. We last visited this setting on 18 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 November 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 11 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The home reopened in March 2021 following a period of voluntary closure. At the time of reopening, the provider applied for the conditions of the home to be changed to accommodate children with learning disabilities. One child has moved into the home since it reopened. The child moved to the home on 13 October 2021.

On arrival at the home, the inspector found that the one child who was placed at the home was living in squalid and unsafe conditions. The child's bedroom had no carpet, curtains or bed covers. The child's bedroom had chipboard flooring which was sodden with urine. There was no natural light in the toilet, and the light did not work; this is the toilet that the child was using. There were 20 windows throughout the house that had been smashed. These were boarded up. There was no natural light in the lounge area.

The child had stuffing from various household objects in his bedroom and in the lounge; it contained old food such as banana skins and pieces of plastic. The house was filthy. There was dried food on the floor, debris and dirt on the stairs and a pungent smell of stale urine throughout the house. The environmental conditions at the home posed health hazards to the child and the staff. The child has been living in an environment that has been significantly neglected, damaged, soiled and not properly accessible. For example, there was no light in the toilet. The environment did not give the child any sense of privacy or dignity and did not meet his needs and keep him safe.

There were no education arrangements in place for the child. Education was raised as a shortfall at the interim inspection in February 2020.

The child had only been out once in the five weeks that he had been at the home. Aside from one trip to a nearby shop, he has not left the home or garden because staff have not taken him anywhere. The home shares a car with another home that is approximately 25 minutes' drive away. Consequently, this home does not have regular access to a car. This has been raised as a shortfall previously because it has a negative impact on children's experiences.

The children's guide is not written in an accessible format for a child with learning disabilities.

The child's family have been able to visit him at the home, so he has maintained important relationships.

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

Except for two agency staff members who raised concerns with their agency, the staff failed to report concerns about safeguarding the child who was living at the home, despite the child living in a dirty, unhygienic and unsafe environment.

Staff have used physical restraint before being trained to do so. Not all staff have had a debrief following their involvement in incidents of restraint. The manager has failed to identify the use of inappropriate restraint and has condoned the use of a non-approved hold.

The child's risk assessment contained conflicting information and was not reflective of the current staffing ratio needs. With effect from 11 November 2021, the staffing level required was three staff to one child, but the risk assessment stated that the child should have a two-to-one ratio. The child's risk assessment stated that the home did not have the child's car harness to increase the child's safety while travelling. However, the harness was seen by the inspector in the staff office. Staff were not provided with the appropriate information to guide practice, and the risk assessment does not accurately state mitigation measures.

The provider has failed to ensure that the home was suitably adapted, equipped and maintained to meet the child's needs, despite these needs being known before the child's admission to the home.

Significant concerns have been raised by agency staff. However, these have not been dealt with as complaints. This is despite the complaints relating to the child's welfare and safety.

The location risk assessment does not reflect risks for children with learning disabilities.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager left the post in May 2021. Since then, two different managers have been appointed. The manager in day-to-day charge of the home at the time of the inspection had been in post for three weeks.

The new manager has not been a registered manager previously. She has not had on-site support or oversight of her practice, despite the very difficult circumstances, lack of sufficient staffing and the extremely complex needs of the child. This is a failure at senior leadership level to ensure that the home is run safely and effectively.

The manager and some staff have not had supervision in line with the arrangements in the statement of purpose. New staff have not been provided with the support that they require or sufficient induction; they were unaware of the expectations of their roles.

There have been insufficient staff on duty to meet the child's needs. Staff were tasked with supervising the child and expected to cook and to clean the home. Due to the very complex and high needs of the child, the staff could not attend to other duties as required because their priority was to keep the child safe. This led to a significant and unacceptable deterioration in the conditions of the environment.

Staff have not been provided with the training required to support the needs of the child. Staff have been using restraint without being trained to do so, and staff have dispensed the child's medication without the appropriate training. Additionally, staff were not provided with training in autism spectrum disorders until three weeks after the child with autism moved into the home.

Managerial monitoring has failed to identify significant, serious and widespread concerns about the environment, practice, staffing and the child's poor experiences of living at the home. It is clear from the squalid conditions at the home, and the management team's failure to use information from complaints and the independent visitor, that monitoring is ineffective.

The home's rota is not a true reflection of the actual staff on shift. This can cause confusion when trying to monitor events or behavioural triggers. This was a shortfall identified at the interim inspection in February 2020.

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 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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; 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 experience of abuse or neglect; 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 make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice;	10 January 2022

ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii)(ix)(c)(i)(ii)) This requirement was raised at the interim inspection and is restated.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and 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 each child— has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)(ii))	10 January 2022
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;	10 January 2022

that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(viii)(b)) This requirement was raised at the interim inspection and is restated.	
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. (Regulation 9 (1))	10 January 2022
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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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; 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 designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(d)) This requirement was raised at the interim inspection and is restated.	10 January 2022

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 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; 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)(h)) This requirement was raised at the interim inspection and is restated.	10 January 2022
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a) (4)(b))	10 January 2022

The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint, 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. Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))	10 January 2022
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)) In particular, maintain an accurate record of the staff rota. This requirement was raised at the interim inspection and is restated.	10 January 2022
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 (3))	10 January 2022
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children’s home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) In particular, ensure that the risks are assessed in line with the needs of the children for whom the home is registered.	10 January 2022

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: SC451152

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stanfield Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 6, Cuckoo Wharf, 435 Lichfield Road,
Birmingham, Warwickshire B6 7SS

Responsible individual: Charlotte Riggs

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Lianne Bradford, Social Care Inspector

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