

SC452713

Registered provider: Greenfields Adolescent Development Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to three children. The provider states in the home's statement of purpose that care is provided for children who have experienced trauma in their formative years. At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager has applied for registration with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 22 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/08/2021	Full	Good
14/01/2020	Full	Good
12/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The inspector found many positives in the progress and experiences of children. However, there are shortfalls in safeguarding practice and management oversight. Had these not been identified at the inspection, the children currently living in the home, and others, may have been placed at risk of harm.

Children are making progress from their starting points. One child is now attending full-time education. He is also more able to safely express his emotions, which has resulted in fewer behaviours that challenge staff. Other children have been helped to access appropriate healthcare services, which has facilitated their needs being better understood and supported. Families and external professionals are positive about the care children receive.

Children said that they like living in their home. They feel safe and well looked after by the adults around them. One child said that they would like to continue to live in the home if they could, although they are aware of the reasons that this is not possible.

Children are supported to participate in the activities they enjoy. One child continues to attend a local youth group and has made a friend, who he spends time with in the community. One child is focused on developing her independence skills with support from the staff team and external professionals. Another child continues to express his artistic flair through his paintings and story-writing.

Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the quality of the environment, which now feels much more homely and warm. The home is clean and tidy, has been decluttered and redecorated and unnecessary physical restrictions have been removed. Children's bedrooms are personalised in line with their interests and individual preferences, and children benefit from a dedicated art space, game station and large gardens. The staff office feels institutional, with laminated flowcharts and guidance pinned to the walls. However, leaders and managers were receptive of subtle improvements that could be made to soften the environment.

Staff say that they enjoy working in this home. They spoke positively about the care of children and the support they receive from their manager. Staff were able to identify the improvements that have been made since the last inspection.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

When a child raised a concern to staff, staff did not follow the home's safeguarding procedure, which resulted in delayed action by leaders and managers. When leaders

and managers became aware of the concern, they reported the concern but failed to share the information with all relevant external professionals. Consequently, a robust multi-agency response was not agreed to help safeguard the child or others. During the inspection, leaders and managers took appropriate action to rectify this shortfall.

Behaviour management plans and risk assessments were updated following the concern being raised. Leaders and managers were clear that they were aware of additional safety measures. However, these safety measures were not shared with staff. Fortunately, this vulnerability in risk management was not exploited, and leaders and managers took action during the inspection to ensure that all staff were aware of the additional measures in place.

A teaching member of staff from a child's school raised concerns about a child's online activity. Care staff supported the child to take appropriate action to keep them safe. Continued vigilance and curiosity from staff identified further concerns, which were quickly responded to.

Staff have responded effectively to support a child's mental health needs. Staff shared their concerns and sought advice and guidance from relevant mental health professionals. This resulted in positive outcomes for the child, who is now more able to seek support and talk openly about their mental health.

Care plans provide staff with an overview of the children's needs and the strategies staff require to support them. As care plans are lengthy documents, the manager has implemented care summaries to ensure that the information is accessible to staff.

The use of restraint has reduced in this home since the last inspection. When restraint has been used, it has been proportional and necessary to the risk of harm. Staff use a range of strategies to avoid the use of restraint, which the child is more often able to respond positively to. Following the use of restraint, staff check on the child's welfare and reflect with them about what could be done differently in the future.

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

The manager has taken action to address the requirements and recommendation raised at the last inspection. Although there remain some areas for further development, leaders and managers are receptive of this.

Despite a reduction in the use of restraint, some incident reports portray staff to be issuing a child with repeated reminders of the consequences of their actions. In some instances, these reminders are punitive and inflammatory for the child, which is not in keeping with the home's ethos set out in their statement of purpose. Leaders and managers explained that this was the result of recording errors, and the manager has provided staff with additional advice and guidance. Although this has

reduced the use of punitive reminders by staff, they remain on a journey in developing their report-writing and de-escalation skills.

Following incidents, staff are supported by the manager to reflect on their practice and identify what could have been done differently. In one debrief with staff, records suggest a negative and uncaring attitude towards a child's care. This was not challenged by the manager at the time, who is confident that this represented another recording error. Despite this, children who read their records could feel upset, confused and worried about the language used by staff.

Training compliance for mandatory learning is generally high. When staff require refresher training to update their knowledge and understanding, they are booked on the relevant courses. The manager has also been proactive in sourcing additional training for staff from external professionals. However, training compliance for some training courses that would support staff to meet the individual needs of the children is low.

Team meetings and staff supervision sessions support staff to reflect on the needs of the children and the care they are providing. Team meetings are also used by the manager to communicate important messages to the staff team about its practices and how they can be improved on.

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 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; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have a clear understanding of how to keep children safe and reduce the risk of harm. Moreover, staff should be supported to identify and respond effectively to concerns about children's safety.	14 August 2023
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.	14 August 2023

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; 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)(h))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that the strategies staff use to support children are consistent with the ethos set out in the home’s statement of purpose.

In addition, the registered person should use review systems to support staff to reflect on their practices and identify areas for improvement.

Recommendation

- The registered person should support staff to understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should be supported to understand that information about children should be recorded in a way that is helpful to them and cannot be perceived to be stigmatising. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC452713

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Greenfields Adolescent Development Limited

Registered provider address: Caretech Community Service Ltd, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Lee Furniss

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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