

SC453372

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and/or social difficulties. Four children live in this home.

There is a manager in post who is in the process of applying for registration with Ofsted.

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. The home's last full inspection was in July 2019. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

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

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: 16 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2019	Full	Good
24/09/2018	Full	Good
19/07/2017	Full	Good
11/01/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's overall experiences are variable. Staff advocate on behalf of children. However, staff do not always escalate matters of concern with the relevant authorities when required. This has led to a delay in children's progress.

Children have positive relationships with some staff. However, there is a significant number of staff who have left or have been dismissed. This, and a further change to the management team, with another new manager starting in post in June 2021, has created some inconsistency with the care that children receive. Children say that these continued changes to the staffing arrangements are unsettling.

The home and surrounding grounds are generally well maintained. However, some areas in the home require decorating and cleaning, and some floors require replacing. This would ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. Furthermore, it provides children with positive messages about acceptable standards of care.

Children benefit from having an independent advocate. This provides children with an opportunity to express their opinion about how they receive care and support. For some children, this has been particularly beneficial, as they have attended their own meetings and contributed in a positive way. This makes children feel valued and supports their progress.

All children have access to formal and informal educational opportunities. Some children are making improved progress in their education attainment. Other children have been supported well by the staff, and these children now attend school. Staff think of creative ways to help children enjoy and achieve. This has included additional e-learning training and getting involved in wildlife projects. Children say that they enjoy doing projects and activities with staff.

Children receive support to maintain good health and well-being. Staff encourage children to attend medical appointments. For some children, this has improved their health outcomes.

Staff support children to spend time with their families and friends, where appropriate. Children have their friends sleep over. This helps children to maintain key relationships and supports them to maintain their sense of identity and have fun.

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

Children sometimes require physical intervention when they are in crisis. However, the records completed following the physical interventions provide conflicting information. It is difficult to establish from some of the records how the interventions benefit the children. Some of the records are not completed in full. In some instances, there are delays in staff completing recordings. Poor management oversight has not highlighted or addressed this poor practice. This leaves children vulnerable to potential harm. This is because staff practice in the use of physical intervention is not sufficiently scrutinised to ensure that this is fair and proportionate.

Most windows in the home have restrictors on them for safety purposes. However, staff do not regularly check that the window restrictors are suitably safe and fit for purpose. In one child's upstairs bedroom, there is damage to a window restrictor. The window was wide open. This was not suitably risk assessed. In another child's room, the window restrictors prevented the window from opening. This means that children cannot access fresh air. The manager took urgent action to address these matters when these were highlighted by the inspectors.

Staff follow missing from home protocols to aid the children's safe return to the home. Children can speak to an independent adult on their return. However, on one occasion when a child was away from the home, they could not make contact with the staff. This was because another child had tampered with the telephone. This prevented the staff from being alerted to the call and assisting the child. The manager failed to update the child's risk assessment and care plan following this incident to ensure further incidents do not occur. This oversight exposes children to the risk of harm.

Staff take immediate action to keep children safe when significant incidents occur. However, there is not always a clear picture in some children's documents around the levels of risk. For example, staff manage incidents of children bullying each other appropriately, but there is no system to track this behaviour. Additionally, there is no system to monitor the outcome of the consequences that are given as a result of bullying behaviour. This oversight means that the manager is unable to evaluate the effectiveness of the sanctions used to help support children improve their behaviour.

Targeted key-working sessions help children to gain an insight into their individual behaviours that may pose a risk to them. Staff support children to understand these risks and develop strategies to help keep themselves safe. Children recognise the progress that they make and are proud of their achievements.

Staff have good relationships with a range of agencies and services. When there are safeguarding concerns, staff follow the necessary protocols. Staff ensure that all the relevant agencies receive the information about the serious incidents. Staff know when to contact the designated officer, in the local authority. A professional commented, 'Staff safeguard children in their care. They are effective at communicating and they have helped [name] massively. I have no concerns about their practice.'

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

The provider has appointed several managers since the last full inspection. During this period, there has been one manager that registered with Ofsted. The registered manager left in June 2021. The current manager has been in post since June 2021. She has experience of managing a children's home. However, the poor retention of managers has restricted the developments made within the home.

The manager recognises the areas of staff practice that require improvement. She has a plan to help drive these improvements forward. The senior staff team is supporting the manager in her role. The senior staff team knows the children well and understands their individual needs. This will support how the manager and senior staff team prioritise their development plan to help improve children's outcomes.

The manager ensures that there are sufficient staffing levels in the home during the day. However, there is one sleep-in staff for four children living in the home. There is no clear risk assessment or plan in place for staff to follow should an incident occur during the evening. There is one incident of a child requiring medical attention in hospital overnight. This resulted in the 'on call' staff attending the home to assist the member of staff on duty. The child did access the support that they required. However, the manager failed to identify the ongoing potential risks with the staffing arrangements during the evening, and update the child's risk assessment following this incident. This has the potential to expose children to the risk of harm. The manager addressed this shortfall during the inspection.

There is inconsistent planning with staff rotas. The management team does not always consider the skills of the staff on duty. For example, staff who are not first-aid trained are the only member of staff on duty for the sleep-in shift. Other mandatory training is out of date for some staff. The manager has a plan in place to address this.

Staff receive regular supervision. There is a clear focus on the needs of individual staff, and the support that is available to them. However, there is no consistent approach in how staff receive supervision. For example, in some staff supervisions there is no information about how staff care for the children. Staff do not always have opportunities to reflect on their practice. Recordings in some staff supervisions do not demonstrate how staff practice benefits children.

There is an inconsistent approach to recording information in children's records and daily logs. This means that the manager cannot evaluate children's daily lived experiences effectively.

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, and 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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c))	11 September 2021
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— 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)) This specifically relates to the registered provider ensuring that the window restrictors in the children's bedrooms are suitably fitted and fit for purpose.	11 September 2021
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;	11 September 2021

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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(vi)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered provider ensuring that the children's risk assessments are current and up to date.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— 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; 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))	11 September 2021
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does	11 September 2021

not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (1) (2)(a))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. 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; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to the registered provider ensuring that the recruitment and retention of all staff, including the registered manager helps provide children with consistent care.	11 September 2021
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. 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;	11 September 2021

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

Recommendations

- The registered provider should ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered provider should ensure that systems are in place so that all the staff, including the manager, receive regular supervision so that they can reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered provider should ensure that staff record in children's documents clearly and accurately and that they demonstrate accountability. ('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: SC453372

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Responsible individual: Richard Parker

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Jacqueline Tate, Social Care Inspector
Paula Shepherd, 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 2021