

SC480655

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care and accommodation for up to four children who have a range of emotional and behavioural needs.

There is an acting manager in post. She is in the process of submitting an application to be registered.

Visit dates: 1 to 2 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 17 February 2020

Previous inspection judgement: good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We identified no serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children form trusting and secure relationships with staff and managers. They benefit from having clear routines and boundaries. They receive care and support from staff who understand their individual needs.

Children are supported to keep in touch with people who matter to them. Staff help them to visit friends and family or to keep in touch by other means. Children have the opportunity to spend unsupervised time in the community with friends. This promotes their independence and sense of belonging.

Children feel able to express their wishes, views and feelings. They meet with staff and managers regularly to share their views. The manager responds personally to each child after these meetings. For example, one child asked for improvements to the home's internet connection. The manager responded quickly to this request.

Children's healthcare needs are met. This includes specialist healthcare support and services. A social worker reported a child making significant progress in their emotional health since living in this home. There is now a plan to identify a foster placement for them.

Children have engaged well in education during lockdown and since returning to school. Children have continued to learn and make educational progress. One headteacher praised the staff team for their support of a particular child during lockdown.

Extensive improvements have been made to the decor and furnishings of the home. Children have been actively involved in this process. They have chosen furniture and personalised their bedrooms. They take pride in their environment, which is homely and welcoming.

The safety of children

Staff understand the risks that children face. Risk assessments reflect children's current and changing needs. Good risk management strategies have contributed to a significant reduction in the number of incidents involving one particular child.

There have been very few missing-from-care incidents. Staff follow appropriate procedures when children do go missing. Staff supervise children well. During lockdown, they have ensured that activities have been put in place to prevent children's behaviours becoming a concern.

The use of physical intervention is minimal. However, management oversight and analysis of restraint records are not consistently robust or detailed.

One staff member has not updated their medication training within the required timescale. They have also not signed the staff signature sheet in the central

medication folder. This could lead to unsafe administration of medication practice. The manager is arranging for update training to be provided as a priority.

Leaders and managers

There has been no registered manager since May 2019. The current manager only came into post earlier this year. She initially worked as a deputy manager in the home. She is experienced, having worked in a variety of similar settings over a number of years.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in relation to staffing within the home. A number of new staff have come into post and several have left. The manager and deputy manager have been doing a number of shifts, to support new and less experienced staff. This is impacting on their ability to perform their management tasks consistently.

High turnover of staff has meant that there are not enough experienced or qualified senior staff working in the home. Recruitment is ongoing and senior managers accept this as an area of need. However, there are sufficient staff on each shift to support the current numbers of children placed.

The requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met.

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 must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))	30/10/2020
The registered person must appoint a person to manage the children's home; if— (a) there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and (b) the registered provider— (i) is an organisation or partnership. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i))	30/10/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- Sufficient staff means a home having enough suitably trained staff (including someone in a management role) on duty to meet the assessed needs of all children in the home, and that those staff are able to respond to emergency placements, where accepted. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC480655

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company Limited

Registered provider address: Belvoir Farmhouse, Woolsthorpe Road, Redmile, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG13 0GN

Responsible individual: Hilary Jones

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector
Bev Allison, Social Care Inspector

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