

SC482872

Park Blue Homes Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to five children with learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties who may have suffered childhood traumas. The home is owned by a private organisation that operates another two children's homes in the locality and a further two in the north of England.

A suitably qualified manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2016.

Inspection date: 4 and 5 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken because Ofsted had not inspected this home since January 2020. In addition, the purpose was to review the action taken by the provider in response to the number of referrals made to the designated officer for allegations (DOFA). The requirements set at the previous inspection were also reviewed. At the time of this visit, five children were living in this home in two properties on the same site.

This visit was undertaken remotely. The inspector reviewed records and interviewed staff, the manager and a director. Children were seen and spoken to through a video call. Consultation occurred with the DOFA. Feedback was sought from social care professionals; no safeguarding concerns were reported. One social worker is very positive about the care provided reporting that their child is extremely well cared for at the home and is confident that their child is very happy living here. The social worker says, 'I am very, very pleased with the care. I can't fault them'.

Since April 2020, the manager has appropriately made seven referrals to the DOFA regarding concerns, or alleged concerns, about staff members' practice. Leaders and managers took swift action to ensure the safety and protection of children. After full

investigation, three incidents led to the instigation of disciplinary procedures. Leaders and managers ensure that lessons are learned from these incidents, providing performance management and additional training for staff as required.

The DOFA confirms that all allegations and concerns are referred to them in a timely manner. Leaders and managers maintain clear records of such incidents and seek professional advice from services specialising in human resources.

A reflective report on a child who has moved away identifies where some aspects of his needs could not be met. This level of reflection and learning is used by leaders and managers to inform staff training and practice development.

Requirements made at the previous inspection have now been addressed. Leaders and managers ensure that an effective selection and recruitment process safeguards children. Recruitment procedures have improved, additional checks are undertaken, and management oversight is more robust. The directors of the organisation have recognised the need for increased effective oversight and monitoring of care practices and records by developing the role of the operations team.

Monthly reporting by an independent visitor lacks consultation with children, their families and social care professionals. The independent visitor rarely makes any recommendations. This raises questions around the level of scrutiny from the independent visitor and hinders the development of the home. The director reports that alternative arrangements are being sought.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/12/2019	Full	Good
19/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/11/2018	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, 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 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— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and 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. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. 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))	28 February 2021

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC482872

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Fairfield Lodge, Evenwood, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham DL14 9NH

Responsible individual: Richard Parker

Registered manager: Nicola Streat

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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