

SC482872

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children in two properties on the same site. The manager has been registered since September 2016.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **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 provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 March 2018

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
07/03/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/11/2017	Full	Inadequate
01/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard requires the registered person to— 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. (Regulation 13 (2)(f)) In particular, ensure that the child's account of events is fully recorded within incident reports.	01/12/2018
20: Restraint and deprivation of liberty Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2))	01/12/2018
23: Medicines 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))	01/12/2018

Recommendations

- Registered persons should seek to involve the local authority and other relevant persons whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.4)
In particular, ensure that all referrals to the designated officer contain full information, accompanied by the incident report.
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations

including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
In particular, apply performance management procedures consistently. In addition, ensure that staff supervision is reflective and held at the frequency specified in agreements.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good care and support that enables them to succeed and make progress. There are strong positive relationships with some staff where children feel loved through the nurturing response that they receive. Regular praise and rewards encourage children and motivate them to modify their behaviour. For example, a child struggling to settle at bedtime is supported by routine, a management plan and stickers on a reward chart. Children are involved in such plans, identifying what support they think they need. Consequently, as they achieve success in areas of their personal development, they grow in confidence and are encouraged to develop further.

All children are engaged in education and are making progress with their learning. There are significant improvements, such as children now attending school without staff support, more enthusiasm to attend from younger children and older children working towards exams, having taken mock GCSEs.

Children live in a homely place; two buildings make up the home. Both buildings are decorated and furnished to a good standard, where children contribute to the choice of decoration and design. Bedrooms contain toys and pictures; photographs of children and staff decorate the living areas. In the grounds, ponies are kept, and children care for guinea pigs as their pets. The comfort of the houses and access to the animals contribute to a family-style home.

Children have numerous interests; they are members of local clubs, such as brownies and Young Leaders, and go horse riding. The 'generation exchange' involves visiting older people in a local care home. This fantastic opportunity encourages the children to think of others while their youthfulness provides some cheer to the older people.

Children are supported to maintain contact with people and places that are important to them. Staff ensure that good communication is maintained with family members and where appropriate they are consulted about their child's care. Children are encouraged to form friendships outside of the home where they can do activities together and this has involved a sleepover.

Children have lots of exercise through numerous activities and are involved in choosing meals with guidance for a healthy diet. As a result, children are in good physical health. They attend routine appointments and see health specialists when required. A range of therapies is available to help children to understand their early childhood experiences and why they live in this home. Play therapy, equine therapy and engagement with the local child and adolescent mental health services ensure that children receive appropriate

support to meet their emotional needs.

As a group, the children and staff take part in adventure therapy each month, in which they experience kayaking, climbing, abseiling, caving, and making dens and fires. Such an adventurous opportunity is relished by children and staff as they learn new skills and discover that they can achieve beyond their own expectations. Adventure therapy, holidays and other positive experiences are captured in decorative memory books full of messages from staff and photographs of shared time together.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been some serious incidents involving physical assaults by children and allegations against staff. The use of physical intervention is mostly effective, preventing children from hurting themselves or others. During some incidents, staff did not use their skills in de-escalation techniques, despite their training in behaviour management. This has led to the restraint of children that was not always proportionate and could have been avoided.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the children's behaviour and through their reflection and analysis of events, they have correctly identified where practice requires improvement. Safeguarding procedures to report to social care agencies and Ofsted are correctly followed. However, on one occasion, the manager did not provide full details to the designated officer. An incident report was omitted from a referral. This oversight hinders the independent assessment of the safeguarding concerns.

Individual risk assessments provide guidance to staff about known risks to children, potential triggers and strategies to reduce the risks. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect children's emerging needs. Staff report that training in understanding autism spectrum disorder was very beneficial and has resulted in one child being calmer, resulting in fewer behavioural incidents.

Children receive guidance on how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media. Many adventurous activities provide new experiences and opportunities to take measured risks, for example in participating in water sports, climbing and abseiling.

Children can identify trusted adults that they can talk to with any worries or concerns. A strong indicator of such relationships is the fact that there are no reports of children going missing from this home.

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

Leaders and managers have made some good progress since the previous inspection and strive for continual improvement. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths of this home and areas for improvement. Attention has been given to improve the recording and subsequent analysis of incidents. This has led to addressing staff

performance when practice is not at the required and expected standard. However, performance management is not always raised through formal procedures, therefore staff disciplinary action is applied inconsistently.

Staff say that they receive good support from the managers and each other. Staff report that they receive supervision. However, the records confirm that these meetings do not always occur at the agreed frequency. This valuable time for staff discussion with a line manager does not always refer to staff practice in relation to specific incidents. This shortfall is a missed opportunity to reflect on, and learn from, the staff member's care practices.

Leaders and managers use internal and external monitoring systems to good effect and act to address shortfalls. There is evidence of learning on the part of the management from complaints, recommendations from the independent visitor and inspection findings. For example, records have improved, and their orderly storage allows quick retrieval of associated documentation. A flowchart for allegation management, restorative consequences, amendments to the visitors' book and compliance with previous inspection requirements all contribute to an improved service. Areas yet to improve include the monitoring of the storage and administration of medication; specifically, to ensure that there are no omissions in the records and that the medication fridge is functioning within the required temperatures. In addition, during the review and analysis of incidents, ensure that the child's account is always recorded.

Leaders and managers arrange face-to-face training opportunities for staff in addition to online learning. Staff report positively on the training they have received in managing diabetes, understanding autism spectrum disorder and behaviour management. Therapists attend team meetings to provide advice and guidance on managing children's behaviour and how to protect and support children who self-harm.

A high number of staff leaving and new staff arriving is unsettling for children. However, a core group of staff, with leaders and managers, work additional hours to ensure that there is some consistency of care. Older children take part in the recruitment and selection of new staff. This level of engagement provides good opportunities for children to be consulted with and listened to.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC482872

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Park Blue Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Richard Parker

Registered manager: Nicola Streat

Inspectors

Clare Davies, social care inspector

Tracey Ledder, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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