

SC486114

Life Change Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider operates the home. The home is registered to care for four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is currently operating without a registered manager. A new manager has been recruited and started his role at the home three weeks prior to this monitoring visit. He will submit an application to Ofsted for registration.

Inspection date: 19 January 2021

This monitoring visit

The purpose of the monitoring visit was to look at a number of safeguarding notifications received by Ofsted and significant shortfalls identified in the home's regulation 44 reports in relation to the leadership and management of the home. In addition to this, two young people were admitted to the home within four days of each other, which has impacted on the stability of the home. The home has been without a registered manager since September 2019 and the proposed manager resigned at the end of December 2020.

The senior leadership team has identified the shortfalls in the management of the home and taken action by recruiting a service manager to oversee the operation of the home. An acting manager started in the role at the beginning of January 2021. Staff reported that they feel supported and empowered by the manager and are encouraged to take more responsibility in the day-to-day running of the home.

Staff understand the risks for young people. Staff demonstrated they know how to respond to young people who go missing from home or try to leave the home unsupervised late at night. This understanding by staff is a strength of the home, which has ensured that on a number of occasions young people have returned home safe supervised by staff and not been reported as missing to the police.

Young people spoken to said they felt safe and generally happy at the home. They have positive relationships with individual staff members, can talk to them and mostly feel listened to. Where young people have concerns about their relationships with staff, they raise these concerns with the manager to resolve any difficulties. The young people told the inspector they knew how to make a formal complaint if needed.

The frequency of key-work sessions has improved. All young people have a key-work session tracker, to enable the manager to monitor that sessions are taking place. The key-work sessions are focused and demonstrate that the young people actively engage in conversations with staff to address risks such as peer pressure, running away from the home and e-safety.

One social worker reported that there had been an unsettled period in the home, due to the change of manager, a high turnover of staff and two young people moving into the home within a short period of time. Some social workers felt that communication with the placing authority in relation to these changes could have been better. That said, social workers also said that young people are making significant progress in all aspects of their lives, they are kept safe and the team provides a brilliant therapeutic placement to support young people.

The matching of young people admitted to the home has not been effective. Staff told the inspector that they were provided with little information or guidance about how to manage the group dynamics of two new young people living in the home. As a result, the home has been very unsettled. This has had a negative impact on some young people's placements and staff retention. Impact risk assessments do not consider the impact of young people moving into the home on other young people living in the home. Equally, they do not identify strategies to manage risks, identify the needs of the young people or the staff team's skills and experience to meet these needs.

There have been two safeguarding incidents that have been poorly managed by staff. Staff failed to complete regular checks on a young person who was emotionally dysregulated as directed in their self-harm risk procedure. The young person alleged that they had consumed disinfectant and the emergency services were contacted. There is evidence that a staff member did not respond to and support the young person using a therapeutic or safe approach. This could have led to serious serious consequences associated with the young person's health and well-being.

On a separate occasion, staff failed to inform the manager that two young people had been found sleeping in the same bed overnight. As a result, there was almost a week's delay in reporting this incident to the placing authorities and the young people being consulted about the incident. The manager has liaised with the designated officer to notify them of the two safeguarding concerns. However, Ofsted has not been notified about the designated officer's involvement or the guidance given to investigate the concerns.

Individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans give a thorough account of agreed strategies to help young people to manage risks. However, some documents do not include up-to-date chronologies and contain conflicting information, for example, if a young person is permitted access to their mobile phone. Risk assessments would benefit from including young people's views about their risk-taking behaviour and how they can be supported by staff to reduce this.

The monitoring of incident and missing-from-home records does not reflect effective manager oversight. Some records do not evidence debriefs with staff and young people following incidents. Young people also told the inspector that they are not always spoken to after a serious incident. This limits the staff team's ability to understand how young people are feeling and identify lessons learned in relation to helping young people to reduce their risk-taking behaviour.

Practice-related supervisions have not taken place regularly for some staff, and so staff have not been given an opportunity to reflect on their practice and raise any concerns they have about the operation of the home. That said, the acting manager has now ensured that all staff have received or are scheduled to receive supervision. Staff reported that there has been an improvement in supervisions in the last month and that additional individual supervisions are also taking place monthly with the clinical team.

Staff have not completed all mandatory training. There are significant shortfalls in safeguarding, fire, first aid and behaviour management training. The manager should also access training specific to the young people's needs in areas such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and self-harm.

The frequency of team meetings has improved. The manager has used these meetings to give the staff team clearer direction and structure to be able to meet the young people's needs. The staff turnover in the last few months has been high, impacting on the continuity of care for young people. Since the acting manager has been in his role, the team morale has improved and young people told the inspector that, in contrast to previous months, there are always staff on shift that they know.

The requirements raised at the last full inspection were not looked at during this visit. Therefore, they remain as requirements and recommendations until the home's next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/06/2019	Full	Good
22/05/2018	Full	Good
20/09/2017	Full	Good
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 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 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)(b)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the safer area report is used in conjunction with a young person's impact risk assessment to ensure that the area is safe for them.	30 August 2019
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; 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;	4 March 2021

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) The manager should ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard young people, including staff demonstrating professional and therapeutic responses to young people in crisis, for example, in relation to young people who may try to self-harm. The manager should ensure that young people's whereabouts during the night are monitored safely in line with agreed strategies and preventative measures. Any concerns about incidents involving young people should be reported immediately. The manager should also prioritise mandatory training, so that it is up to date for all staff members, including first aid, fire, behaviour management and safeguarding training.	
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. 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's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;	4 March 2021

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)(c)(e)(h)) The leadership team should ensure that the staff are supported in their roles, in order to sustain a consistent staff team and continuity of care for the young people. The manager should ensure that following incidents young people and staff receive thorough debriefs, to be able to identify lessons learned and effective strategies to improve staff practice. The manager's oversight of risk assessments and behaviour management plans should be thorough, to ensure they include young people's views about their risks and up to date information and chronologies. The manager should ensure staff have completed training to meet young people's needs, for example in self-harm and PTSD.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) Specifically, ensuring that young people who move into the home have their needs and risk-taking behaviour assessed for compatibility against the other young people living in the home. There should be a robust impact risk assessment in place to evidence this. Prior to a young person's admission, the manager should consider the staff team's views, skills,	4 March 2021

and experience to be able to manage a young person's behaviour and meet their needs effectively.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e)) Specifically, notifying Ofsted of any involvement with the designated officer in relation to safeguarding and staff practice.	4 March 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure they maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment 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)
Specifically, in relation to ensuring that when verifying references, further questions are asked and noted, when a basic reference is given from past employers.
- The registered person should ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: SC486114

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Life Change Care Limited

Registered provider address: Room 205 B1 Business Centre, Empire Way,
Burnley, Lancashire BB12 6HA

Responsible individual: Julie Stirpe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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