

Children's home – Monitoring visit

Inspection date	09/09/2016
Unique reference number	1228091
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Chris Scully

This monitoring visit

Ofsted made aware of a number of concerns from the person carrying out the independent monitoring visit at the home on 1 September 2016. These included:

- The registered manager leaving her post.
- Staff not having the qualifications or skills to meet young people's needs.
- Incomplete staff recruitment files.
- Staff supervision not taking place.
- Incomplete documentation for young people, including behaviour management plans, care plans, referral documentation, and missing from care and child sexual exploitation risk assessments.
- An absence of training of staff on the home's therapeutic model of care.

The independent person was advised by Ofsted to speak to the responsible individual, in the first instance. Ofsted asked the responsible individual for a written response regarding the points raised through the independent person's monitoring visit. Ofsted then carried out an announced visit to the home on 9 September 2016.

The inspector found that the registered manager was no longer at the home, and was informed by the provider that she was resigning her position. The responsible individual was overseeing the management of the home as an interim measure and has sought to recruit a suitable replacement.

The inspector found that staff files are of a poor quality and are incomplete. There is missing information in each of the staff files, such as evidence of their qualifications and training, including mandatory training and confirmation of their relevant experience for the role. Some staff were appointed prior to their references all being received. This is not in line with safer recruitment and does not provide effective safeguards for young people. The responsible individual is actively chasing this information.

Staff supervision had not taken place in line with company policy. However, the responsible individual has now undertaken supervision sessions with all staff. A supervision matrix has been created to ensure that future supervision is planned and available for all staff. Staff training and the induction process are not yet robust. Training courses had been cancelled at short notice by the registered manager and are now hastily being rearranged. A number of staff have not yet completed mandatory training, such as child protection training. The responsible individual has sourced online training for this and is supporting staff's learning, with face-to-face training later in the year. However, the timescale for completion is unclear. Only two staff members hold a level 3 childcare qualification. The remaining four staff are enrolled on courses to gain this qualification. This means

that the majority of staff working with young people do not hold an appropriate childcare qualification.

The inspector reviewed young people's files and found that, while necessary information is present, a number of important documents, such as missing from care and child sexual exploitation risk assessments, lack sufficient detail about the specific needs of young people and how they are to be met. This has the potential to impact negatively upon the home's ability to safeguard young people. The lack of detail and guidance for staff also fails to ensure that staff provide consistent messages to young people.

Healthcare plans are not robust. Young people's health records and documentation do not provide sufficient information about a young person's individual needs, how these are to be met in practice or tell the story of their time here. Not all documents are signed and dated by the author, and not all are updated when new information becomes available, for example the missing from care risk assessments. Information is in place within the home regarding the therapeutic model of care stipulated in the statement of purpose. The responsible individual is overseeing its implementation, but confirmed that staff have yet to have training on how to use the model.

The statement of purpose is not current and refers to the national minimum standards. It fails to make clear what the arrangements are for the effective supervision of the person supporting the therapeutic input at the home. It is unclear as to how young people, staff and other parties can access the home's complaints policy, safeguarding policy and behaviour management policy. There is insufficient information about the action to be taken, should an allegation be made against a member of staff. This does not promote transparency or effective sharing of information with placing authorities, parents and carers.

The responsible individual is taking action to address each of these issues and has compiled an action plan. They confirmed that a new manager was being appointed. Staff files and young people's documentation continue to be updated and some mandatory training has been undertaken, with more planned for the near future. The responsible individual also confirmed that they are planning to use a human resources company to assist with the process of ensuring robust recruitment and vetting of staff. This should help to protect young people from unsuitable people working at the home.

The responsible individual acknowledged that the shortfalls identified are unacceptable and is working to rectify these. The home has agreed to not admit any further young people until the issues are resolved. As a result of this monitoring visit, a number of requirements have been issued regarding the records on young people and staff, safer recruitment and the home's statement of purpose.

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to care for three children with emotional and /or behavioural difficulties.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the provider must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(2)(b) 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.</p> <p>In particular, ensure that checks are carried out to assess staff's suitability to work with children and young people prior to commencing their employment.</p>	24/10/2016
<p>16: Statement of purpose</p> <p>Ensure that the registered person compiles in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers all of the matters in schedule 1. (Regulation 16(1))</p>	24/10/2016
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>(1) Ensure that the registered person recruits staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>(2) The registered person may only—</p> <p>(a) employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>(b) if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that—</p> <p>(a) the individual is of integrity and good character;</p>	24/10/2016

<p>(b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; and (d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(d))</p>	
<p>36: Children's case records</p> <p>Ensure that the registered person maintains records ('case records') for each child which— (a) include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of the entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>24/10/2016</p>

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.

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