

Children's Home – Monitoring visit

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Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Debbie White

This monitoring visit

This visit took place in response to the provider sending Ofsted a safeguarding notification. The notification indicated a potential breach of regulation regarding a safeguarding incident.

The incident involved a child making a comment to a staff member that should have alerted her to inform the registered manager of a possible child protection concern. There was a delay of two days before the staff member informed the registered manager. The registered manager informed the child's social worker of the disclosure, but she did not fully follow local child protection protocols.

The child's social worker investigated the incident and determined an outcome of no further action. In this instance, the child was not at risk. However, a failure to follow robust child protection procedures compromises children's safety and welfare.

The provider sent the notification retrospectively. The incident occurred before a recent full inspection that took place on 23 September 2016. The reason given by the provider for sending a retrospective notification was to be open and honest. The provider identified, following the inspection and discussions about keeping children safe, that they should have recognised the incident as a notifiable event.

Since the incident and subsequent inspection, the provider has significantly improved child protection measures. All staff had previously completed a level 1 child protection course. They have now been booked to have level 2 and level 3 training. This investment in staff development is a positive step forward.

Leaders and managers have ensured that all staff have had one-to-one supervision that specifically focused on how to respond to a child protection concern. They have held safeguarding workshops and established good links with local safeguarding officers, whom they can contact for guidance and advice. This demonstrates that leaders and managers are striving to give staff a good understanding of how to keep children safe.

The provider has employed new staff who have the qualifications and experience to work in a children's home. These new staff will mentor and support members of the current staff team, most of whom transferred from adult care homes operated by the same provider. The responsible individual is actively seeking to improve the home's recruitment and retention strategies to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff. This shows that the provider is taking a serious stance in tackling recruitment issues.

The registered manager, operations manager and the senior support worker have made positive links with another children's home that offers similar services to children. They are working together to share good practice and to mentor and support each other. This interactive way of working develops positive professional links.

These measures are having a positive impact. Staff better understand their

responsibility to report all concerns to a senior manager within the organisation. They also know how to report concerns directly to social services. Leaders and managers are clear of their roles in progressing all child protection concerns.

Notwithstanding the improvements in keeping children safe, the home's child protection procedures are lacking. They are not written in accordance with regulation. Consequently, there is important information missing, and the procedure does not clearly set out the actions that all staff, leaders and managers must take following a child protection concern. This potentially compromises future child protection referrals, should staff depend on the home's procedure for guidance.

There is one new requirement to improve the way in which the home safeguards children.

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides short-breaks care and accommodation for eight children and young people who have a learning and physical disability. A private provider operates the home.

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) meet(s) 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>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular –</p> <p>(a) provide for liaison and cooperation with any local authority which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>(b) provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about current or ongoing abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the home is located;</p> <p>(c) provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about past abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the alleged abuse or neglect occurred;</p> <p>(d) provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response;</p> <p>(e) describe the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect; and</p> <p>(f) describe how and to whom staff are to report, without delay, any concern about abuse or neglect of a child. (Regulation 34(1)(b) and (2))</p>	<p>04/11/2016</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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