

Children's home – Monitoring visit

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Unique reference number	1228092
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Rosie Davie

This monitoring visit

Following the temporary suspension by the care quality commission (CQC) of another company also run by the responsible individual, a monitoring visit took place.

The visit focused primarily on the processes used to recruit and vet all of the staff. The files of all permanent and bank staff were scrutinised.

Shortfalls were identified. For example, when the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have identified that some employees have previous convictions, all but one risk assessment of members of bank staff have been completed by the registered manager. The information is fair and proportionate, but the written assessment fails to make clear in all cases whether the named member of staff has been actively involved in the discussion about the measures and controls to reduce risk to children. The assessments are not signed and dated by the registered manager, the individual or the responsible individual. The bank staff and some of the permanent staff who have transferred across from the CQC-regulated company have not completed a new job application for the residential childcare post. For example, the job applied for reads as 'driver/escort'. The complete process for the seeking of references falls short, specifically when the individuals have transferred from the parent company. This is because, in most cases, there is no record of a reference of suitability from the last employer. All of this demonstrates the provider's failure to complete efficient and robust pre-employment checks for every individual coming to work in the home. Failure to have proficient vetting systems in place increases the likelihood of unsuitable adults gaining access to vulnerable children. As a result, Ofsted has issued a compliance notice.

All of the staff complete safeguarding training. However, the course is online and is an introduction to basic concepts in relation to recognising the signs of child abuse. Given that the staff are caring for children who have complex histories and are from complex social backgrounds, the provider is failing to demonstrate the key role that it has in providing training and development for all of the staff in this area.

The home keeps a record of some visitors to the home, but does not record every visitor. This shortfall demonstrates that staff do not fully understand their responsibility to have a complete system in place to document when any adult, other than those who are working on shift, comes to this home.

The remaining shortfalls in regulation and quality standards were not examined in this visit. The progress in these areas will be reviewed at the next routine inspection.

Information about this children's home

This is a single home that is operated by an independent provide and offers care and support for up to four children, irrespective of gender, who have 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) 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
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety (Regulation 32(1)). This is with specific reference to initial reference requests and risk assessments. *	21/03/2017
<p>11: The positive relationships standard</p> <p>In order to meet the positive relationships standard, with specific reference to incidents in the home, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(2)(xi) de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children.</p>	31/03/2017

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- In a restraint situation, staff should use their professional judgement, supported by their knowledge of each child's risk assessment, an understanding of the

needs of the child and an understanding of the risks that the child faces ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.53). This is with specific reference to when any child makes allegations against staff.

- The registered person must ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role that they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person must ensure that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4). This is with specific reference to records of every adult visiting the home.

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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