

1228091

Phoenix Care And Education Limited

Monitoring visit

Information about this children's home

This children home is owned by a private provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 6 June 2017

This monitoring visit

At the full inspection on 19 April 2017, the home was judged inadequate. This was because the inspector found that the lack of stable and effective leadership and management had resulted in a failure to promote and safeguard children's welfare. In particular, leaders and managers failed to provide the staff with suitable guidance and the skills to identify signs that children may be at risk, and to take effective action to respond to serious concerns about children's safety. As a result, children were left at risk of harm. Also, leaders and managers allowed people to start working with children before all the necessary recruitment checks had been completed. The registered provider, therefore, failed to take the appropriate steps to minimise any potential risks to children from unsuitable people.

Consequently, Ofsted issued the registered provider with the three compliance notices under section 22A of the Care Standards Act 2000. These related to regulation 12 the protection of children standard, regulation 13 the leadership and management standard, and regulation 32 fitness of workers of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015.

An unannounced monitoring visit took place on 6 June 2017. The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the progress made by the registered provider in meeting these three compliance notices.

During this monitoring visit, the inspector found improvements in the management of the home. The registered provider has appointed a new permanent manager with relevant experience of being in charge of children's homes and suitable management qualifications. The manager has designed a clear and targeted action plan that shows

she has a good understanding of the weaknesses and the steps needed to make the required improvements. The manager has introduced new ways of working including: clear and unambiguous expectations of standards of behaviour for all staff and children; setting up consistent daily routines for children; systems to improve communication between staff and reflect on their practice; and efficient recording systems that provide an accurate picture of children's experiences and progress, which enables effective monitoring of children's case records. As result, children's experiences and the quality of care they are receiving are improving. The child currently in placement is clearly benefiting from living in a better organised home that is bringing structure and routine into her life. She is now going to school and showing signs of emotional security in the ways she manages her feelings and anxieties. The manager is also actively working towards improving the quality of care planning to ensure that the people and services supporting the child are working to a coordinated plan that meets all of the child's needs.

The manager is building a clear understanding of each member of staff's level of experience, qualifications, knowledge and skills, and is assessing their competence to carry out their roles and responsibilities. She has designed and set up a suitable staff development programme to identify staff's individual learning styles and to provide them with training relevant to their roles and the assessed needs of the children they support.

The manager is providing staff with guidance and support to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in protecting children from harm. She has provided staff with opportunities, individually and as a team, to reflect critically on the times when children have been at risk of harm, to challenge poor practice and to develop stronger safe care practices. The manager has designed a suitable training plan for staff to build their understanding of safeguarding procedures, identifying and managing risk, and whistleblowing.

Staff showed a clearer understanding of their role in protecting children. They showed that they have the skills to identify risk and take appropriate action to manage situations safely. New routines and clear expectations for staff ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times. Staff know where children are and when children have left the house feeling upset. On these occasions, staff engaged with the child positively, providing her with the necessary support to ensure that she returned safely and was protected from harm.

The manager has introduced new risk assessment and management plans. The risk assessment that staff completed for the child's friends' proposed overnight stay shows that staff clearly identified the potential risks and the steps needed to reduce risk through suitable and proportionate protective measures. Staff used the plan successfully and the children had a lovely time. Staff skilfully balanced the children's protection with providing them with the opportunities to have enjoyable experiences similar to other children of their age.

The manager has identified and taken effective action when there has been a serious concern about a child's welfare. She followed the safeguarding procedures and regulations by contacting the child's placing authority, the local designated officer

and Ofsted with her concerns. The local designated officer and social worker report that the manager showed a good understanding of safeguarding issues, shared information openly and acknowledged where safeguarding practice fell below the required standard. The manager showed an ability to work in a coordinated way with other agencies and has taken appropriate action to protect children.

The registered provider has taken steps to ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed that safeguard children and minimise any potential risks to them. The registered provider has recruited two new members of staff, including the manager, since the last inspection. The inspector found that the registered person has not allowed these people to start working at the home until all the necessary recruitment information is obtained and their suitability has been fully assessed. In addition, the manager is retrospectively gathering and checking the recruitment information for existing staff to confirm their suitability for their roles. This includes obtaining two written references and verifying the information with the person who provided the reference, and recording an assessment of each person's suitability when they have criminal convictions. The manager has also revised the application form to include information about the person's reasons for leaving their previous employment.

However, the registered provider has not taken steps to ensure that a responsible individual is in place to supervise the management of the home. The manager would benefit from the support and guidance of a skilled and experienced responsible individual to make the required improvements. Also, the responsible individual would provide the registered provider with management oversight and scrutiny of the home that ensures that the manager and staff are making the necessary progress.

The registered person has complied the requirements of the compliance notices in relation to regulation 12, regulation 13, and regulation 32. This being the case, Ofsted does not plan to take any further enforcement action at this stage. However, a further unannounced inspection will take place to review how these improvements are being embedded to improve the quality of care provided.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/04/2017	Full	Inadequate
09/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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

Statutory requirement

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
An organisation may only carry on a home if the organisation has notified HMCI of the name, address and position in the organisation of the responsible individual. A responsible individual must satisfy the requirements in paragraph (5)(a) to (c); and have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (4)(ii) and (7)(a) and (b))	30/06/2017

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: 1228091

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Phoenix Care And Education Limited

Registered provider address: 31 Hansby Drive, Speke, Liverpool, Merseyside L24 9LG

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Nick Veysey, social care inspector

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