

1256135

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is operated by a large national provider. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- Risk management is not yet sufficiently robust. This is in relation to staff actions to keep children safe and the quality of risk assessments.
- Records of physical restraint are not detailed. As a result, the registered manager is unable to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken by staff.
- Not all staff have received recent additional training in key areas, including: reducing risks associated with behaviours that challenge, attachment, separation and loss, children misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harm, going missing or e-safety. As a result, some staff require further training to enable them to meet the complex needs of children.
- Children are not yet consistently kept safe or positively engaged by an adequate number of staff with the relevant skills, expertise and knowledge.

The children's home's strengths:

- Some children are making some good progress towards meeting their aims and objectives.
- Children are positive about the relationships that they have with some staff.
- Children's attendance at tutor sessions and in education has increased.
- The number of serious incidents has reduced.
- The new registered manager is successfully raising standards, developing the staff team, and improving outcomes for children.
- The home's management team is fully aware of the service's strengths and weaknesses and is continuing to drive positive change.

Recent inspection history

This is the service's first inspection since re-registering.

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff –</p> <p>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. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(a)(i))</p>	30/09/2017
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff –</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(iii)(v))</p>	31/10/2017
<p>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.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff –</p> <p>have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b) and (2)(c))</p>	31/10/2017
<p>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.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the</p>	31/10/2017

<p>registered person to ensure that –</p> <p>the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b) and (2)(d))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure. Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person") has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(i–viii)(b)(c))</p>	30/09/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children's progress is not yet consistent or always sustained. Some children are making good progress in areas of their lives. However, others struggle. Their progress is affected by many factors, including new children moving into the home, peer pressure and external factors. This results in behaviours that place them and others at risk.

The new registered manager has focused on stabilising children's high-risk behaviours. Increased multi-agency work and direct work with children mean that the help that staff give is better targeted. It focuses on day-to-day issues, such as staying safe, appropriate relationships, healthy lifestyles, anger management and growing independence.

Staff are thinking about and discussing children's progress. Strategies are now beginning to focus on encouraging children to engage positively, for example attending tutor sessions, working to meet simple individualised agreements and having key-work sessions. Other strategies support children to develop new skills, for example going on holiday, caring for a hamster and rabbit, developing cooking skills and increasing independence skills.

Children are beginning to engage more consistently. They are attending meetings with partnership agencies, such as the child and adolescent mental health services and the youth offending service. Some children have improved and sustained relationships with family members. Some children are now in full-time education and both their attendance and personal academic achievements are good. Where other children have struggled to attend and engage in education, virtual heads and social workers are positive about the work undertaken by the registered manager and staff team to support alternative home tutoring. This is in preparation for new school placements identified for the start of the next academic year. Another school principal described how staff proactively supported a child's phased introduction into an alternative school provision. This successfully helped her to settle and engage in lessons. As a result, she now attends full time without staff input.

Children are expressing their views and have involvement in planning their futures. They know how to raise concerns, make complaints or use the new 'grumbles' process. They are getting involved in decorating the house, planning holidays and activities. They are feeling more listened to and involved in the life of the home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children's safety and well-being are not consistently supported or managed. Staff are still developing the confidence, knowledge and experience that they require to consistently meet the complex needs of children. The new registered manager has prioritised ensuring children's safety and developing the staff team's skills at identifying and reducing risk.

Some children still struggle to stabilise high-risk behaviours. Some children have been missing from care, struggle to control their anger or have become destructive in the home. There has been one episode of bullying and some fire setting behaviour; however, work completed by the staff have successfully ceased these behaviours over past two months. This is because staff have begun to develop skills that help them manage the environment. They also have a greater understanding of children's 'triggers', which helps them avoid or de-escalate incidents. Pre-placement, day-to-day and missing from care risk assessments do not support staff in this process. They do not detail all known risks or contain strategies to aid staff in reducing or responding to concerns.

Although staff are more skilled, they are still learning. When a new risk arises, they are not always proactive in identifying it or addressing it, for example stopping a child playing a computer game identified as suitable only for adults, monitoring a child's appropriate mobile phone use and preventing a child going missing during the night.

Some staff have not attended refresher training that would support them to further develop their knowledge and expertise in safeguarding children. They have not yet all received refresher training in a range of subjects, including drug and alcohol awareness, children who go missing from care, self-harm and e-safety. The registered manager has started to develop the staff team's knowledge and skills through supervisions, handovers,

a team day and short sessions in team meetings. As children's behaviour continues to stabilise, she intends to ensure that staff now attend additional training sessions.

Children have positive relationships with some staff and can identify staff whom they feel confident to talk to if they have a problem or concern. Some children recognise the positive impact that these relationships have had on their progress. One child stated, 'I'm a different person. I was going missing every day, coming back stoned. I now don't smoke weed. Staff sat me down and talked me through it. They talked me through the dangers.'

The use of physical intervention within the home has reduced, and is now low. One of the interventions used to help with this reduction was an external audit carried out by the de-escalation and physical intervention trainers used by the organisation. They undertook a detailed study of incidents and made a range of valuable action points. As yet, these have not all been addressed. They included retraining the whole staff team in de-escalation and physical intervention, as well as attending training in attachment separation and loss. This audit also made recommendations to improve the quality of records of incidents. This inspection found that records of incidents and debriefs with staff members still lack the required detail and the scrutiny to improve staff practice and safeguard children and staff.

Staff receive training in child protection, the risks of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. The local authority safeguarding designated officers report effective implementation of inter-agency safeguarding procedures and sharing of concerns. They state that the new registered manager has, 'reacted robustly but proportionately to concerns'.

Fire safety checks are regularly conducted. Concerns raised during the inspection regarding gaps around doors were in the process of being addressed. The registered manager has subsequently kept Ofsted informed of actions taken because of a recent fire service visit.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Ofsted re-registered the home in May 2017 after a change in ownership. There has been no change to the home's statement of purpose, staff team or the management structure. This is the first inspection of the service since the re-registration.

A new registered manager started in post in March 2017. She is experienced and appropriately qualified. She has given good focus to addressing serious safeguarding concerns and has developed this service significantly. She is working to clear plans to raise standards within the home. Her hard work is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of care delivered by staff and outcomes for children. Although this is not yet consistent, the direction of travel is clear in this improving service.

The registered manager and responsible individual understand the home's strengths and the next areas for development in order to improve the care provided to children. The independent visitor provides oversight of the running of the home and makes clear reference to areas of practice that need to continue to improve for the benefit and safety

of children. The registered manager's last internal review of the home was robust and is informing future plans.

Partnership working arrangements between the service, the placing authorities and other external agencies have improved, and on the whole are now positive. Agencies report a growing confidence in the new registered manager. She proactively liaises with partner agencies, such as the police and placing authorities. When necessary, for example, when staff or the outcomes of children are possibly being compromised, the registered manager is not afraid to give robust challenge to elicit appropriate change.

The registered manager has given good focus to developing the staff team. Team members are enthusiastic about their roles and said that they 'felt included', that 'morale is better' and that they are now 'supported' by the new registered manager.

The registered manager knows that she does not have a formal overview of the training required by members of the staff team yet. This was a strategic decision and there is a plan in place to address this over the next couple of months. There is an absence of additional training for the team in some areas to ensure that they have the knowledge and expertise to meet the needs of children. The registered manager has not fully completed the organisation's induction training, choosing instead to prioritise being in the home to address practice issues. The registered manager is also yet to attend any of the local children safeguarding board courses such as 'Managing allegations of abuse against a person who works with children', 'The Staffordshire Way' and 'Designated lead person multi-agency training'.

The registered manager has a strong vision for the service. She is resourceful and strategic within her role. She uses a range of monitoring systems to assess and review the quality of care provided. The registered manager needs to assess whether safeguarding and high-risk incidents can be managed with the current ratio of staff or if there needs to be a review of staffing levels at specific times, for example to allow a child to be supported by a minimum number of consistent staff. This would support the child during key times, for example to attend child and adolescent mental health services appointments or go for a walk with a staff member to calm after an incident, or to complete an application for college.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1256135

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

Registered provider address: Prospects House, 19 Elmfield Road, Bromley BR1 1LT

Responsible individual: Joanne Collins

Registered manager: Jennifer Cooper

Inspectors

Dawn Bennett, social care inspector

Christy Wannop, social care inspector

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