

1237027

Registered provider: Jamores Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home for three children who have emotional and/or behavioural needs, a mental disorder or a learning disability. The provider has four children's homes registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 October 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

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: 20 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Two compliance notices were issued at the previous inspection.

Key findings from this inspection

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

- Children's experiences are not consistently positive, and some children fail to make significant progress.
- Staff's efforts to promote children's positive behaviour are ineffective. There has been an increase in the number of critical instances.
- Staff do not always adhere to the home's missing persons procedures.
- Children do not share consistently good relationships with the staff team.
- Records of complaints are incomplete.
- Management systems do not accurately identify children's progress.
- Staff's partnership working with local authority social workers requires improvement.

The children's home's strengths:

- The registered manager has a greater presence at the home than previously. Management oversight of the service is improving.
- The home has recently appointed a new manager and deputy manager.
- Staff receive regular supervision and feel well supported.
- Group work facilitated by the home's two therapists is effective in helping children to explore managing difficult relationships and safeguarding issues.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/06/2017	Full	Inadequate
15/11/2016	Full	Good

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>39: Complaints and representations</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))</p>	01/12/2017
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered provider must ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. In particular, that staff strictly adhere to the home's policies and procedures when children are missing. This includes collecting missing children promptly when their whereabouts are known. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(v))</p>	01/12/2017
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>The registered person must ensure they obtain documentary evidence of any qualifications, which the person considers relevant for the position. (Schedule 2(5) Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015)</p>	01/12/2017
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))</p>	01/12/2017
<p>5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met</p> <p>The registered person must ensure staff -</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5(d))</p>	01/12/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff understand and apply the behavioural management strategy at all times. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34) It must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. Staff are to consider more consistent use of incentives to promote positive behaviour.
- Ensure that the children's home is a supportive environment that meets the needs of children. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9) In particular, to consider the timing of the home's fire drills to promote the effective evacuation of the building.

Inspection judgements

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

Children receive individualised support and care that generally meet their identified needs. However, children have not continued to make significant progress and their experiences have not been found to be as positive as at the last inspection. Children are less positive about their experiences. One child commented, 'It's not like it was the last time I spoke to you. They're going over the top, forcing it.' Local authority social workers share the view that the progress made by children's progress is not steady. A social worker said of the service, 'I can't see what difference they're making.'

Children's educational outcomes are variable. Some children attend school regularly and are making progress, while others do not attend due to permanent exclusions. Despite the efforts of staff, these children continue to refuse to engage with the alternative educational provision that the staff and educational professionals arrange. As a result, their learning outcomes are poor.

Children have the opportunity to engage in leisure activities arranged by the staff team. Staff regularly encourage children to identify the activities that they enjoy, and staff host social events such as the recent summer barbecue. Staff provide funding for children to take part in recreational activities with their families, and specialised activities such as horse riding. However, children largely prefer to socialise with their families and friends and do not routinely take part in activities planned by staff.

Children's health outcomes are also variable. Children have access to primary care services and specialised healthcare services, as required. For example, children with disabilities attend sessions with child and adolescent mental health services. Staff support children to access community-based health services that, for example, help to curb their misuse of legal substances. However, this has been largely unsuccessful.

The home's two therapists have continued to offer advice, support and information to children. This is to explore their emotional needs and offer strategies that address poor

and challenging behaviour. The impact of the work of the therapists appears less effective than in the recent past. This is evident in the noticeable rise in incidents where children display aggressive behaviour. A child commented, 'The "Escape the TRAP" programme is fine, but the anger management stuff just doesn't work anymore.' There has been an increase in the number of critical incidents resulting from children's challenging behaviour. Again, children and local authority social workers comment that the support that children receive from specialist staff to improve their emotional resilience has not, of late, had a significant impact.

Children generally share a good relationship with the staff team. They indicate that they enjoy spending time with some staff members, but that this is not the case with other members of the team. Children feel that some staff take an interest in their welfare, but not all. Similarly, they feel that some team members have respect for them and listen to what they have to say, while others do not. Children regularly attend house meetings, which are a creative and effective opportunity for children to share their views on a wide range of issues. Typically, these include decision-making about the choice of meals, leisure activities, the decor of the home and ideas to help to improve the quality of the service. Children's views have some influence in shaping the service. For example, children make decisions about the redecoration of the home and have a choice of which staff are to become their key workers.

Children receive clear information about making complaints and know who to approach if they are unhappy. Since the last inspection, the home has received 15 complaints. The last inspection identified that not all records of complaints included the action taken and how the complaint was resolved. This remains the case, as some entries in the home's complaints logs do not contain this information.

The staff team appropriately meets the identity needs of children. Staff explore and encourage children to explore any gender, cultural or religious needs that they may have. For example, children attend church and staff are mindful of the impact that children's learning disabilities have on their behaviour.

Staff encourage children to keep in touch with their brothers and sisters, parents and friends, as outlined in individual care plans. Children's friends and family members are welcome to visit the home, and staff facilitate family contact that takes place away from the home.

Children have the opportunity to develop independent living skills to help to prepare them for adulthood. Practical skills development includes budgeting, meal shopping and meal preparation, keeping their private space tidy and attending to their personal care.

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

Staff work hard to protect children from harm, neglect and abuse. Children say that they feel 'somewhat safe' at the home. Children benefit from staff's training in safeguarding and the home's child protection policies. Since the last inspection, there has been one allegation made against a member of staff by a child. Staff managed the incident appropriately and in accordance with the home's child protection policies.

Staff's management of challenging behaviour is sometimes inconsistent, and is therefore not fully effective. This is despite staff's comprehensive completion of risk assessments and behavioural management plans. Staff records reflect well the individual behaviour of children, risks posed and strategies in place to help to minimise or eliminate harmful or risk-taking behaviours. Written assessments offer staff clear guidance on anticipating poor behaviour and how best to manage challenging behaviour. Key staff are skilled in following through with established boundaries. For other staff, maintaining such boundaries is a challenge. This raises the risk that children will receive inconsistent messages regarding their behaviour and attitude.

Local authority social workers share this view. A social worker commented: 'There appears to be no consistency in the home's behaviour management. They struggled with boundaries. They did try, but they struggled and strategies were inconsistent.' The social worker feels that this inconsistency has contributed to the increase in this child's challenging behaviour and an increase the number of complaints that this child has recently made against staff.

Some of the actions taken by staff have not helped this situation. In one instance, a staff member used poor language to a child and then denied doing so, causing the child distress. In another instance, during a car journey, staff chose to confront a child with sensitive information that they knew would cause him distress. The conversation resulted in setting off the child's aggressive behaviour.

Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in critical incidents. These include two occasions when staff have restrained children. The last inspection identified the poor management and recording of instances when staff restrain children. Since that time, there has been a noted improvement in staff's restraint practices, subsequent investigations, the de-briefing process and record keeping.

Children rarely go missing from the home, and concerns for children previously deemed at risk of child sexual abuse have been reduced. This has largely been as a result of children's participation in targeted group work with the home's two therapists.

Since the last inspection, there has been one episode of a child going missing. Staff have access to the home's revised policies and procedures relating to children being absent without permission from the home and going missing. These protocols are clear and in accordance with the procedures of relevant placing authorities. However, staff do not

consistently follow this guidance. For example, on one occasion staff did not promptly collect a child who had been missing from the home for in excess of 24 hours. This was not in the child's best interests or in accordance with the home's child protection policies.

Key work and one-to-one sessions show improvement. These help children to explore their feelings and encourage them to reflect on their behaviour. The home's therapeutic approach to care remains a strength of the service.

Staff make use of incentives, sanctions and restorative approaches to discourage poor behaviour. The success of these strategies is variable. Some children suggest that the amount of money awarded for improved behaviour is low, so financial incentives are not effective. For others, the use of creative incentives is more successful. For example, children responded positively to the prospect of regularly participating in a community-based cadet group.

The home's premises have recently undergone a programme of redecoration and refurbishment to communal areas. This includes the kitchen and lounge areas. Children's bedrooms have also been redecorated, and children are generally happy with their surroundings. There are no health and safety concerns. However, children do not always respond appropriately to fire drills and refuse to leave the building when the fire alarm goes off. This was the case on the day of the inspection, when the fire alarm rang unexpectedly. The home's record of fire drills confirms that children regularly refuse to evacuate the building. Staff must consider the timing of routine fire drills if they cause particular distress to some children.

The organisation's staff recruitment and vetting practices are generally safe. Staff complete appropriate checks on adults before they work at the home. However, managers must ensure that they can evidence new staff's formal qualifications. This is to confirm that they are suitably trained to work with vulnerable children.

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

The last inspection identified significant weaknesses in the home's leadership and management. Since the last inspection, there have been noticeable improvements in the effectiveness of managers.

The home's registered manager in recent months has had a greater presence at the home. This has had a positive impact on the management oversight of the service and has helped to improve the quality of care and safeguarding practice, in particular. The home has recently appointed a new manager for the home, as well as a deputy and senior staff, to enhance the effective management of the home.

The home's monitoring systems show improvement. Case files evidence the completion of file audits. This ensures that information about children is up to date and appropriately maintained. Records accurately reflect staff's work with children. However, new management review tools that analyse children's progress do not do so accurately. As a result, the service has an overly optimistic view of the children's experiences and

progress, despite evidence to the contrary. For example, the analysis does not identify the significant increase in the frequency of some children's challenging behaviour. This is despite other records clearly indicating that this is the case.

The home's monitoring systems fail to reflect accurately the frequency of critical incidents. Not all incidents recorded in children's individual behavioural records are noted in the home's incident book. This is a deficit, as audits do not efficiently detail the total number of critical incidents to help to inform management action planning.

The home's regulation 44 monitoring visits and reports are effective in highlighting deficiencies and invite managers to indicate how they intend to remedy the identified shortfalls. Managers promptly produce action plans that do so. Monitoring reports comment on staff's ability to keep children safe and the promotion of children's well-being, as required.

Local authority social workers indicate that the communication between them and staff requires improvement. Social workers confirm that they receive clear information when incidents occur but that they do not receive routine general feedback of placement activities, as they expect. Two social workers comment that they do not receive weekly or monthly placements reports and that this is a hindrance to effective partnership working. Social workers also comment that staff do not always follow through on their instructions.

Staff now consistently notify Ofsted and others of key events, as outlined in the regulations. This allows the regulatory body an opportunity to review and confirm that managers take appropriate action in response to critical incidents.

The quality of support and guidance provided to staff is good. Staff supervision sessions are regular and meaningful. Newly appointed staff participate in an induction process, while long-serving staff receive annual appraisals. Staff training opportunities show improvement and these now meet the development needs of individual staff members. Team meetings are another avenue for support and learning. Staff have the opportunity for group and individual sessions with the therapeutic team to support their practice.

The home's revised statement of purpose is a detailed document which outlines well the aims and objectives of the service. Children have access to good information about the home, what to expect and staff's expectation of them. This easy-to-read document includes clear information about advocacy and making complaints.

The leadership and management of the home require further improvement if the service is to have a significant positive effect on the experience, outcome and safety of children.

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: 1237027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Jamores Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Thames Innovation Centre, Studio 52, Veridion Way, Erith DA18 4AL

Responsible individual: James Adebayo

Registered manager: Ebunoluwa Ajakaye

Inspector

Sandra Jacobs-Walls, social care inspector

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