

1245390

Registered provider: DMR Services Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately owned and is registered to care for up to five children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 19 October 2017

Judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Young people and social care professionals have expressed positive views about the quality of care in this home. However, widespread and systemic failures undermine the consistency of care. A number of safeguarding incidents have taken place since the full inspection, raising concerns about the capacity of the staff to keep young people safe from harm.

The leadership and management team has been unable to ensure that staff provide consistently safe childcare. Significant safeguarding incidents include young people drinking alcohol and smoking cannabis in their bedrooms. There has been sexual activity between young people, and some incidents in the home and in the community have potentially been exploitative. Three placing authorities are

undertaking child protection enquiries as a result of this particular incident. Records show that young people have been leaving the home at night. Additionally, young people have been entering each other's bedrooms at night. This demonstrates that staff are struggling to monitor young people's whereabouts, resulting in staff being ineffective in preventing potentially harmful behaviour.

A further safeguarding incident involved a young person throwing hot water towards another young person's face. The paramedics were called to deal with this incident. Records show that staff had missed several opportunities to prevent this incident escalating. Concerns are raised about the capacity of staff to recognise the indicators of potential conflict, to de-escalate the situation and to manage relationships between young people to prevent them from harming each other. The requirement from the previous inspection is not met as a result of these safeguarding incidents.

The provider has notified Ofsted of significant events. Staff have liaised with placing authorities and have been proactive in seeking the most up-to-date multi-agency plans in relation to each young person. Staff have demonstrated that they are engaging with placing authorities. The provider has met the requirement in this regard from the previous inspection.

Young people freely access the staff office where confidential information is kept, and did so during the inspection. Inspectors were concerned that young people could access confidential records and access an open key cabinet, which contained the keys to the medication cabinet. Previously, a young person who has self-injurious and suicidal behaviours entered the office. He took the keys to the garage and the gate and left the home. The continued access to the office by young people demonstrates that the day-to-day arrangements in this home fail to safeguard young people. Confidential information is not kept safe.

Since the last inspection, a number of new staff have been recruited. Inspectors found discrepancies in the recruitment records, in terms of conflicting information. This shows that management monitoring systems are ineffective in relation to recruitment. Deficits in training were identified as not all staff have undertaken training as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. In particular, not all staff have received training in safeguarding and behaviour management. This does not support consistent, safe care and is likely to be a contributing factor regarding problems in managing behaviour and recognising safeguarding situations at an early enough stage.

There have been several incidents of young people going missing from the home. On one occasion, this period of missing was for several days. Staff follow appropriate

procedures and liaise with safeguarding agencies in these instances. However, staff do not ensure that young people have an interview with someone independent of the home when they return. This is a missed opportunity to speak to young people about any harm that may have occurred, or to better understand why young people go missing and prevent this happening again in the future. Additionally, managers fail to evaluate their plans and responses to young people who are missing from the home. This does not promote improvement in safeguarding strategies.

Staff use physical intervention to prevent young people harming themselves or others. Records relating to physical intervention are poor. Records provide an outline of the incident, but hold scant information. Records do not include the detail or description required under regulation. This means that any analysis of incidents is limited. Records do not provide an insight into the situation, how it could have been avoided and how to respond more effectively in the future. It is therefore difficult to ascertain how necessary and proportionate physical intervention is in all cases.

The inspection identified a number of shortfalls in leadership and management. One key difficulty is accessing the information which is required under regulation. The majority of records are held electronically. While this is recognised practice, managers were unable to retrieve the information required for the inspection in a timely manner.

Importantly, case records for young people were not easily accessible. Young people confirmed that they have not seen their records or contributed to their plans. This does not enable young people to fully participate in their care planning.

A young person newly admitted to the home advised that she did not have a copy of the children and young person's guide. As a result of this, the young person did not have a full understanding of the care provision, her rights, or how to complain. This also demonstrates a lack of understanding from staff about the young person's needs.

Managers have not ensured that all records are kept up to date and signed by the author. Additionally, important documents, including the admissions register, did not hold essential information. Staff rosters did not reflect the daily staffing levels in the home. This fails to provide full and accurate information about the young people who live in the home and the staff who work there.

The manager has not submitted the home's statement of purpose to Ofsted since 2016. This limits the regulator's ability to understand the purpose, function and any changes in the home.

Managers are clear about the shortfalls identified at this inspection and are committed to take decisive action to remedy shortfalls and raise standards.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, the 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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard requires the registered person to ensure that each child— has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home. (Regulation 7(2)(b)(ii))	20/11/2017
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(iii))	20/11/2017
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—	20/11/2017

manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(iv))	
<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—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))</p> <p>This is with particular reference to the monitoring of young people, preventing young people from leaving the home at night, accessing each other's bedrooms and other unauthorised areas, such as the staff office.</p>	20/11/2017
<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—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p> <p>This is with particular reference to ensuring that management monitoring systems identify any discrepancies in recruitment records. It is also about ensuring that physical intervention records are robustly monitored.</p>	20/11/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	20/11/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development.</p> <p>This is with particular regard to ensuring that all staff, including casual staff and agency staff, receive training as outlined in the statement of purpose. (Regulation 33(4)(a))</p>	20/11/2017
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in	20/11/2017

<p>relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; a description of the measure used and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure and the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii))</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	20/11/2017
<p>The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4, and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37(2)(a)(b))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to a record in the form of a register showing in respect of each child all details relating to their admission, legal status and discharge arrangements.</p>	20/11/2017
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to having a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, and a record of actual rosters worked.</p>	20/11/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that the following items, which may be kept in electronic form, are kept in an accessible manner—</p> <p>the statement of purpose, the children's guide, children's case records, independent person's reports, and quality of care reviews. (Regulation 38(a)(b)(i)(m)(n))</p>	20/11/2017

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.30)
- Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing

from the home (Regulation 36 (Schedule 3(14))). This information should be shared with the placing authority and, where appropriate, with the child's parents. Evaluation of missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care (see paragraph 15.2). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.31)

- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

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 differences 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1245390

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: DMR Services Limited

Registered provider address: DMR Services, 102 Queslett Road East, Sutton Coldfield B74 2EZ

Responsible individual: Sally Neville

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Amanda Ellis, social care inspector

Katarina Djordjevic, social care inspector

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