

# 1228091

Registered provider: Phoenix Care and Education Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

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

**Inspection date:** 17 January 2018

**Judgement at last inspection:** Requires improvement to be good

**Date of last inspection:** 2 August 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 required improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

There has been no registered manager at the home since August 2016. However, on the day of the inspection, a new manager started in post. The lack of a registered manager has contributed to poor leadership and management practice. For example, managers have not completed a quality-of-care review in the last six months. As a result, managers do not fully understand the strength and weaknesses of the home. Monitoring and performance management systems do not ensure continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. Furthermore, the provider did not notify Ofsted that the last manager left the home in December 2017 and Ofsted will write to the provider regarding that issue.

Staff lack the required experience and knowledge to meet the needs of young people.

The inspector identified that only three out of six staff have achieved the relevant qualification. Furthermore, staff do not consistently receive supervision. This means that there are missed opportunities for managers to help staff develop their skills and address weak performance. As managers do not monitor young people's progress effectively, the impact of staff's inexperience is not fully understood. While the incoming manager will receive supervision from their line manager, the provider must ensure that the person supervising the home's manager has the appropriate experience in children's social care to fulfil the regulation and to provide the post-holder with clear and practice-based supervision.

Staff vacancies mean that agency and bank staff are needed to care for young people. Poor leadership means that managers do not know how many vacancies they currently have or how often they are using non-permanent staff. This lack of clarity extends to the recruitment checks completed on new staff as those records could not be provided as part of the inspection. Consequently, that requirement is repeated from the last inspection.

Young people do not experience continuity of care. This erodes trust and respect between staff and young people. For example, young people told the inspector that they feel that some staff do not know what they are doing. The home's statement of purpose refers to sleeping-in staff being deployed in the home during the night; however, recent critical events have meant that the nocturnal staffing levels have been increased to provide waking night staff. The leaders and managers have not completed a full analysis of the staffing levels required in the home, to meet the needs of the current group of young people. In addition, current practice means that the home is being operated contrary to the details in the statement of purpose, which causes confusion for placement commissioners.

Young people feel that staff do not always listen to their views and wishes. This means that young people feel disempowered. When young people make complaints, managers investigate the concerns; however, they subsequently fail to record the outcomes of the completed investigation. As a result, there are missed opportunities to learn and improve practice.

Managers do not ensure that case records, such as placement plans, are up to date. This means that staff are not always provided with clear guidance on how to provide young people with personalised care. This has the potential to inhibit young people's ability to reach their full potential.

In some instances, staff's risk management is weak. For example, staff do not review strategies to safeguard young people identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation. As a result, there are missed opportunities to ensure that young people are safe. In other examples, safeguarding is better. For example, staff successfully use an independent service to complete return interviews when young people go missing and work with the placing authority to review safety planning.

Staff use bedroom door alarms indiscriminately for all young people. This detracts from

the domestic feel of the home, but also impacts on young people's privacy. A young person told the inspector of their embarrassment at staff knowing when they use the bathroom. Staff do not review the use of such monitoring systems or consider how to reduce the need for them.

Staff have recently started to lock the kitchen at night. This is to prevent young people from taking excessive amounts of food during the night. A lack of planning means that staff have not implemented more appropriate interventions to address these behaviours. Staff do not always consider how best to support young people to make positive changes to their behaviours.

Young people expressed mixed views about the physical environment of the home. However, two young people were consistent in complaining to the inspector about the limited seating in the lounge area. A single couch and a bean bag mean that it is not a space which promotes family living. Other areas of the home are starting to look tired and in need of decoration. This detracts from the extent to which this is a homely and pleasant space for young people to live in.

At the last inspection, seven requirements were raised. Three of these have been successfully completed in relation to the inclusion of personal education plans in one young person's records and changes to the system for administering controlled medication and the return of regulation 44 reports to Ofsted. The latter requirement has been satisfied as the provider can evidence that the reports have been submitted to Ofsted as required. However, there have been delays in the reports reaching the inspector as the independent visitor was using an inaccurate email address, which has now been addressed. The four remaining requirements relating to leadership and management; staff recruitment checks; staff supervision; and young people's case records have not been complied with and are repeated. This indicates a lack of capacity to improve and shortfalls in the implementation of positive change to meet the needs of young people.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/08/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/04/2017	Full	Inadequate
09/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

## 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
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii))</p>	01/03/2018
<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—</p> <p>Ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child</p>	01/03/2018

<p>and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received;</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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>(3) The registered person must—</p> <p>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.</p> <p>(5) Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b)(5))</p> <p>With particular reference to the nocturnal staffing levels that are outlined in the document that differ from current practice.</p>	01/03/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that the privacy of children is appropriately protected, and that any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises that is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home is necessary and proportionate, is kept under review and, if necessary, revised and allows children as much freedom as possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(a)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	01/03/2018
<p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home and the registered provider is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home.</p> <p>If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27(1)(a)(b)(iii)(2)(a)(b))</p>	01/03/2018
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment</p>	01/03/2018

<p>procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home when full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. The registered person may permit an individual to work at the home only if the registered person has taken all reasonable steps to obtain full information about each of the matters in Schedule 2, but enquires in relation to any of the matters in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Schedule 2 are incomplete; full and satisfactory information has been obtained in relation to the matters in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 2; the registered person considers the circumstances are exceptional; and the registered person ensures that the individual is appropriately supervised carrying out their duties, pending receipt of the outstanding information. (Regulation 32(1)(3)(d)(7)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))</p> <p>This includes, but is not exclusive to, the supervision of the home's manager.</p>	01/03/2018
<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 and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b))</p>	01/03/2018
<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>	01/03/2018
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality-of-care review') at least once every six months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality-of-care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality-of-care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality-of-care review</p>	01/03/2018

and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality-of-care review.

The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality-of-care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality-of-care review is completed. (Regulation 45(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4))

\* This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

## Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Specifically, the registered provider should give consideration as to how to increase the level of seating available in the lounge to promote communal living. Furthermore, the registered provider should consider the development of a clear plan to improve the decoration and maintenance of the home

## 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:** 1228091

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Phoenix Care and Education Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Unit 31, Meridian Business Village, Hansby Drive,  
Speke, Liverpool L20 4NZ

**Responsible individual:** Gregory Tyson

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector



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