

1229534

Halliwell Homes Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to accommodate seven children irrespective of gender between the ages of seven and 14 years old. The home offers a two-year programme, supported by therapy, for children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 7 February 2018

This monitoring visit

Since the full inspection in October 2017, Ofsted has received three notifications from this children's home, the contents of which suggest that there may have been a breach in regulation. An unannounced monitoring visit was undertaken on 8 February 2018 to look into the information that Ofsted had received in more depth.

Since receiving these notifications, Ofsted had been in communication with the home to request information. The purpose of this was to enable Ofsted to assess whether sufficient action had been taken by the provider in relation to these serious incidents. Not all of the information requested by Ofsted was provided. Ofsted therefore decided to carry out a monitoring visit to look the serious incidents in more depth.

One notification, received by Ofsted on 12 December 2017, informed HMCI of a serious incident that had occurred at the home. A child had opened a number of presents when on family contact, but was unhappy when, on his return, the home's staff asked him to 'hand in' all of his presents to them until Christmas Day. The young person was angry, resulting in him punching a wall and injuring his hand. Urgent medical attention was sought for the young person. Scrutiny of documents and discussions with staff identified that no breaches in regulation had occurred, but the acting manager acknowledged that the incident could have been handled more proactively by staff and the child's social worker.

The second notification, received by Ofsted on 21 December 2017, informed HMCI that an allegation of abuse had been made against a staff member. Children had been instructed by staff to sit around a dining table in an attempt to get one of the children to confess to damage that had been caused by the removal of the ballcock from a toilet cistern. Children remained seated at the table for six hours before staff

allowed them to leave.

The inspection found that the incident was clearly logged throughout the day in the home's logbook. The logbook records that after three hours one child confessed that it was him. However, the staff member challenged him, by recording in the logbook, '[Child] appears to be lying [staff] tells [child] to tell them where the missing part is or he is lying like the last time.' The child shrugged his shoulders and confessed that it wasn't him. An hour later, and four hours into the punishment, the same child began to self-harm by biting his forearm. The staff members on duty continued the punishment until late afternoon. After six hours during which no child had confessed to the damage, the children were allowed to leave the table, to undertake chores and have their evening meal. The children were reminded by staff that this 'may continue tomorrow'. The events of the day are recorded in each child's restorative parenting daily progress sheet and in the handover log.

The monitoring visit found that none of the staff on duty took action to stop the punishment. Staff did not question or challenge the senior member of staff who was leading on the punishment. The acting manager explained that when questioned, staff said that they had been intimidated and were afraid of the senior staff member. The acting manager could not explain why the registered manager, the lead therapeutic parent and the deputy manager had not raised their concerns at the handover meeting the next day. In addition, the acting manager could not explain why these concerns were not raised until 20 days after the incident had taken place.

Although the provider took action to demote the senior member of staff, he continued to work over the Christmas period as it was decided that his absence over Christmas would be detrimental to the children due to his positive relationship with them.

Following an internal investigation completed by the provider, no formal disciplinary action was taken against the staff members involved. The senior member of staff was reinstated to his senior position prior to the completion of a four-week improvement plan. The other staff who were on duty at the time of the incident had not been provided with individual supervision to remind them of their individual safeguarding responsibilities or to support and enable them to understand and manage their responses to the behaviour and emotions of children.

A copy of the provider's investigation into this matter was requested on the day of the monitoring visit, but was not available. Ofsted continued to request this information from the provider after the monitoring visit, but the provider did not provide the investigation report. A 'summary report' was however provided, but this did not provide sufficient detail for Ofsted to assess whether or not the provider had investigated the matter thoroughly. It did not outline any actions taken following the event nor any learning addressed following the serious incident.

The monitoring visit found that the actions of staff were excessive and unreasonable. The staff failed to protect the children from harm. They caused children to be emotionally distressed, which led to one child confessing to something that he did not do, to bring the punishment to an end. When that failed, he began to self-harm. The actions of the staff were punitive and controlling. Staff failed to

safeguard children and, as a result, their mental and emotional well-being have been compromised. Furthermore, staff at the home failed to take effective action at the time of the incident, or on the following day when it was discussed in the handover to staff coming on duty. As a result of these shortfalls, a compliance notice has been sent to the provider regarding a breach of regulation 12 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

A third notification, received by Ofsted on the 29 January 2018, informed HMCI that there had been a serious incident in the home where a child had been punched in the head by another child in the home, resulting in a black eye for the child who had been punched. The staff did not take the child to hospital until the day after the incident. The safeguarding lead for the organisation instructed staff to take the child to hospital when she found out that staff had not sought medical treatment for the child the previous day. The purpose of the visit was to test his brain function and establish if he had fractured his cheekbone.

Again, the monitoring visit found that the logbook clearly documents that the child received punches to the head during this vicious assault. The logbook goes on to describe that later in the day bruises could be seen around the cheek and eye of the child and that an ice pack was given to try and reduce the bruising. Although the incident report reflected the entries recorded in the logbook, the incident report was completed by a member of staff who was not a witness to the event.

The acting manager, who was on duty at the time of the incident, stated that he did not recall that the child's face showed signs of bruising. The acting manager also declared that had he known this he would have sought medical treatment for the child. The acting manager could not account for why other staff members who had witnessed and recorded the incident had not sought medical treatment for the young person sooner.

The above findings show that staff failed to protect the health and welfare of the child. The delay in seeking medical attention could have had serious consequences for the child. The staff were neglectful of their duty to seek emergency services for a child in their care who had been injured. As a result of these shortfalls, a compliance notice has been sent to the provider regarding a breach of regulation 10 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/11/2016	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
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard	03/12/2017
8: The education standard	03/12/2017
11: The positive relationships standard	03/12/2017
12: The protection of children standard	03/12/2017
40: Notification of a serious event	03/12/2017
16: Statement of purpose	03/12/2017

<p>*The health and well-being standard</p> <p>10.—(2) The health and well-being standard is that—the registered person must ensure</p> <p>(c) that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice treatment and other services as the child may require.*</p>	<p>9 March 2018</p>
<p>The positive relationships standard</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; (ii) are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. 	<p>9 March 2018</p>
<p>*The protection of children standard</p> <p>12.—(1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and (ii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; <p>(b) 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.</p>	<p>9 March 2018</p>
<p>Behaviour management and discipline</p> <p>19.—(1) No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child.</p> <p>(a) any measure involving punishing a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child.</p>	<p>9 March 2018</p>

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- Ensure that decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home are only made when this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
In particular, review the need for, and use of, locks on communal areas.
- Ensure that all staff have been adequately trained in the principles of restraint and any restraint techniques appropriate to the needs of the children the home is set up to care for, as defined in the home's statement of purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.57)
- Provide all staff with sufficiently frequent supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- Ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
In particular, ensure that all staff receive suitable training in radicalisation and QCF level 4 Pillars of Parenting Certificate, as listed in the Statement of Purpose

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: 1229534

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Halliwell Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Tape Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1BB

Responsible individual: Karen Mitchell-Mellor

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Elaine Clare, social care inspector

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