

1228091

Registered provider: Phoenix Care And Education Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to care for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
There has been no registered manager since 30 August 2016.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 April 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 17 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 17 January 2018, the home was judged to have declined in effectiveness. A compliance notice was issued under Regulation 13.

On 6 March 2018, a monitoring visit identified that the registered provider had not made sufficient progress to meet the actions outlined in the compliance notice. An additional

compliance notice was issued under Regulation 33.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
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, 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. <p>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(c)(i)). This particularly refers to repairing the damaged cupboard door upstairs, ensuring that the driveway is level and safe to drive on and decorating damaged walls and paintwork.</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that staff understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. <p>(Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(iii)(iv)(vii)(viii)(ix))</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the health and well-being needs of children are met; 	20/07/2018

<p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to— understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding; understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) and (2)(a)(ii)(iv))</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— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi)(vi))</p>	20/07/2018
<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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; 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)(f)(h))</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p>	20/07/2018

<p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if—</p> <p>the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child’s needs;</p> <p>the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(e)(i)(ii))</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>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (1)(3)(a)(b))</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p> <p>This particularly refers to ensuring that the fire risk assessment is reviewed and fire extinguishers are stored and located appropriately.</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children’s home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect 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—</p> <p>the name of the person so appointed; and</p> <p>the date on which the appointment takes effect.</p> <p>(Regulation 27 (1)(a) and (2)(a)(b))</p>	20/07/2018
<p>If the registered provider is an organisation, the organisation must ensure that the responsible individual undertakes such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the responsible individual has the skills needed for supervising the management of the home. (Regulation 29 (2))</p>	20/07/2018
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>(2) The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home;</p>	20/07/2018

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(b))	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>This particularly refers to ensuring that the manager of the home is supervised by a person with the necessary skills and experience.</p>	20/07/2018
<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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))</p> <p>This particularly refers to ensuring that local authority care plans are on file and followed in practice.</p>	20/07/2018
<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 6 months.</p> <p>The system must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) and (5))</p>	20/07/2018

Recommendations

- Any home using monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living in the home in accordance with regulation 24. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16) This particularly refers to assessing the appropriateness of using bedroom door alarms during the day and night.
- Any staff member who is in charge of leading a shift should have substantial relevant experience of working in a children's home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.21)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Young people's care is disorganised and at times poorly executed. For example, a young person told the inspector that the rules of the home change so often that staff themselves struggle to be consistent in their expectations of young people. Young people told the inspector that they find this frustrating and unsettling.

Not all young people are accessing education. Staff are ineffective at overcoming the barriers to young people attending education. Poor planning by managers and the staff team contributes to the delay in supporting some young people to re-engage with their educational provision. Staff do not give young people enough support to achieve academic success.

Young people's presenting emotional health needs are not known or suitably addressed by staff. For example, staff do not always know whether young people have current or historical patterns of self-harming. Staff are passive in their responsibility to ensure that young people receive the emotional health support they need. For example, staff lack an understanding as to why specialist services, such as child and adolescent mental health services, are involved or what treatment young people are receiving.

Young people do not experience a homely, well-maintained living environment. For example, externally the driveway is potholed and in some parts is not safe to drive on, and internally walls throughout the home are marked and damaged. A broken cupboard door upstairs is an unsightly reminder of recent damage caused by a young person. The appearance of the home has an impact upon young people's sense of belonging.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Young people present with risk-taking behaviour, which goes unchecked by staff and managers. For example, on one occasion staff found a young person, who is not a resident, in the house. Staff's response to this was inadequate. Staff failed to ascertain the identity of the young person and have not taken any steps to prevent this, or any other, unauthorised person from being able to enter the home undetected.

Poor practice by managers and staff places young people at risk of harm. For example, one young person was allowed to stay overnight at an adult's house without authorisation from the local authority or an assessment of risk. The subsequent failure to review the young person's risk assessment left the young person at risk of a repeat incident and is indicative of the poor safeguarding practice in the home.

Young people frequently go missing from the home. During such incidents, the young people use alcohol and drugs and are at risk of exploitation. Staff's inconsistent approach to responding to these concerns means that intervention to address them is fragmented and unsuccessful in reducing risk.

When young people are vulnerable to exploitation, managers and staff do not take decisive action. For example, one young person was allowed to have inappropriate levels of free time despite her assessed need identifying that she should have high levels of supervision to keep her safe. Neither managers nor staff act upon their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

Fire safety arrangements are poor. For example, managers have not completed an action from a fire risk assessment dated December 2016; specifically, this is to ensure that fire extinguishers are stored correctly in the home. Furthermore, a planned review of fire safety in December 2017 has yet to be completed. This exposes young people, staff and visitors to the potential risk of harm.

Young people are monitored indiscriminately through the use of bedroom door alarms. Managers and staff do not assess the needs of young people to determine why such systems are required. This affects young people's privacy.

The manager's vetting of new staff is not robust. For example, the manager does not ensure that references and identification checks are completed. This means that the suitability of staff to work with young people is not clear.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There has been no registered manager since 30 August 2016. In the absence of a permanent manager, staff have lacked the necessary guidance and support to work effectively with young people.

The responsible individual lacks the skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the role. Furthermore, the responsible individual has taken no steps to maintain or improve his professional development. The responsible individual accepts this position, and is in the process of appointing a new responsible individual. However, currently the responsible individual is not able to provide the necessary management oversight to ensure that young people are safe and making progress.

Staff are inexperienced, unqualified and have not yet received satisfactory training. This means that staff do not have the skills they need to keep young people safe and help them to make progress. For example, a member of staff told the inspector that the safeguarding training only enabled them to respond to crises and did not equip them to work preventatively. Young people are at risk of harm because of staff's lack of knowledge and expertise.

The registered provider has not complied with the actions outlined in the compliance notice issued under Regulation 33 on 6 March 2018. Specifically, the manager has not received any professional supervision or support from an individual with appropriate experience within the social care field. The failure to comply with this compliance notice is indicative of the weak and ineffectual leadership team.

Managers do not use learning from internal and external audits to improve the care young people receive. For example, the manager has not used a completed quality of care review to develop a clear plan to improve outcomes for young people.

The manager does not ensure that there are well-established links with key stakeholders. For example, one social worker told the inspector that staff do not always inform her when her young person goes missing. Staff do not work collaboratively with partner agencies to keep young people safe and promote their welfare.

The manager does not ensure that copies of the local authority care plan are on file and understood by staff. This contributes to staff's disjointed approach to care planning and to the inconsistent care and support provided to young people.

The statement of purpose does not accurately reflect the service delivered by the registered provider. This means that local authorities do not fully understand the extent to which staff are able to care for young people with complex emotional health needs. This could result in young people being inappropriately placed at 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.

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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