

1229534

Registered provider: Halliwell Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered for up to seven children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home offers education on-site at a registered school.

The home has been without a registered manager since 31 January 2018.

An incident, that had occurred since the previous inspection, was under investigation by the appropriate authorities at the time of this inspection. This meant that records relating to this incident were not considered by inspectors as they were not available in the home.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 July 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 failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 25 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

An unannounced monitoring visit took place on 7 February 2018. As a result of the visit, four requirements were made. Two of the requirements were subject to compliance

notices. This included Regulation 10, the health and well-being standard, and Regulation 12, the protection of children standard.

On 15 March 2018, Ofsted carried out another unannounced monitoring visit to the home. The purpose of this visit was to assess the progress made by the provider to ensure that there were effective safeguarding practices in place and that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. In particular, to assess the progress made by the home in meeting the steps required in both compliance notices. The visit found that the compliance notices had not been met. As a result, the notices were repeated.

On 17 April 2018, Ofsted carried out a further unannounced monitoring visit to the home. The purpose of this visit was to assess the progress made by the provider to meet the two compliance notices. The monitoring visit identified that the provider had taken appropriate action to meet the identified steps in both compliance notices.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plan; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(c))	31/08/2018
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— 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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii))	31/08/2018
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and	31/08/2018

<p>welfare. (Regulation 7 (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, when considering the use of the internet, mobile phones and holidays.</p>	
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; and an understanding about acceptable behaviour and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, this standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(iv)(ix))</p>	<p>31/08/2018</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; and have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and ensure 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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(b))</p>	<p>03/08/2018</p>
<p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p>	<p>03/08/2018</p>

<p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</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 and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child's relevant plans are followed.</p> <p>(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (5))</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>

<p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, that the use of alarms on bedroom doors is kept under review.</p>	
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	31/08/2018
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home 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>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each matter in schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(d))</p>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)(2))</p>	31/08/2018

<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; and</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, and a record of the actual rotas worked, and a record of any persons who work at any time at the home.</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay of a significant event in the home. (Regulation 40 (4) (e))</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>
<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>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 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 and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>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; and</p> <p>make a copy of the quality of care review report available on</p>	<p>31/08/2018</p>

request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b))	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2))	31/08/2018

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children make limited progress in key areas of their lives due to serious weaknesses in management oversight and staff's practice that impact negatively on their welfare and safety.

The manager has failed to provide sufficient staffing to ensure that the workforce provides continuity of care for the children currently living in the home. As a result, children do not receive consistency of care. This has had a negative effect on their overall experiences and progress.

Staff work with health professionals to promote children's health and well-being. However, there is poor practice in relation to the safe handling of medication. Staff regularly handle and count controlled medication without the use of gloves or any other equipment. This is not hygienic and could potentially result in cross contamination.

Individual placement plans are not consistently reviewed or updated to reflect the individual needs of each child. In one instance, the inspectors found that a placement plan had not been updated since the child had moved into the home in October 2016. Furthermore, managers fail to ensure that key documents, such as local authority care plans and looked after review minutes, are on children's files. There is limited evidence to demonstrate that the home has addressed this shortfall with the local authority. This limits the staff's ability to effectively plan for children's care.

Managers do not ensure that staff are clear about which approved sanctions can be used with children. Children told the inspectors that they are often grounded for a week at a

time, and for the duration of the grounding they are not allowed to play in the garden. Inspectors found that in April 2018, one child had been grounded for a total of three weeks. Children are sanctioned even after they have apologised for their poor behaviour. Sanctions used are not always restorative, more often they are disproportionate and punitive. Furthermore, children's liberty is restricted unnecessarily.

The home uses an inappropriate reward system for promoting positive behaviour. Children can earn an 'I owe you' which is then exchanged for a treat. Children told the inspectors that a treat can include individual time spent with staff. The manager said, 'I know that time with staff should not be a luxury but, in reality, it is.' This approach fails to value children or to ensure that they feel well cared for.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made to ensure that children had access to the internet. This has not been met. The children's computer is broken, and managers and staff were unclear about how long this had been inaccessible. This disadvantages the children because they do not have access to resources on the internet or to have the opportunity to learn about how to use the internet safely. On a more positive note, all children have 100% attendance in school.

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

Safeguarding practice does not promote the safety and welfare of children. Specifically, when children go missing from the home, staff do not always respond effectively to help keep children safe. For example, on one occasion, a child was returned to the home by the police. The police had found the child in the company's vehicle which the child had taken without consent. Until the police returned the child to the home, staff were not aware that the child had taken the keys from the staff's office and had driven away from the home. This has significant implications for the child's safety and that of members of the public. It does not demonstrate safe practice or appropriate supervision by staff in the home. Furthermore, the child's risk assessments do not contain appropriate strategies about how to minimise any further such occurrences.

Children are at risk of harm as the staff do not always have the knowledge and expertise to safeguard them. Managers have not ensured that staff have read and understood key policies and procedures, such as the safeguarding and whistleblowing procedure. Additionally, only three staff have completed training about self-harm behaviour, despite this being an identified risk for some children.

Fire safety arrangements are poor. For example, actions from a fire risk assessment, dated 17 May 2018, have not been completed. Specifically, a self-closing mechanism had not been fitted to a fire door in the dining room. This was rectified during the second day of the inspection. Staff use door stops to hold fire doors open. This invalidates the fire system and therefore exposes children to the further unnecessary risk of harm.

The blanket policy of using door alarms on all bedroom doors to monitor children does not take into account the individual needs of each child. Permission is sought from placing authorities for their use. There is no immediate impact for children from this

shortfall. However, their right to privacy is not being appropriately considered.

Physical intervention is used and, despite most staff having received suitable training, this intervention is not always appropriate. One child told the inspectors that on one occasion, they had been held by staff using two different techniques. Inspectors verified that the staff member from the home had used positive behaviour management techniques, while the agency staff person had used a Team Teach hold. The use of differing techniques potentially puts the child at risk of injury. Another child told inspectors that they had been held on their bed during a physical intervention. The manager confirmed that she had concerns about the significant number of physical interventions that had taken place in children's bedrooms and had planned to discuss this with staff. However, she had not acted to address this prior to the inspection. Inspectors have asked the manager to investigate both allegations raised by the children and to provide Ofsted with an outcome.

There is insufficient evidence in the staff files that are held in the home to demonstrate that safer recruitment procedures have been followed. Consequently, managers were unable to demonstrate that staff are suitable to work with children. Six allegations have been made by children relating to staff members since the last inspection. Ofsted and the local designated officer have been appropriately notified of these.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home has operated without a registered manager since 31 January 2018. Although a new manager was appointed, she failed to submit her formal application to Ofsted within the required timescales set out in the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. Ofsted were informed during this inspection that the manager has resigned from her post and is working her notice period. However, no contingency plans are in place for her imminent departure.

There has been no stable leadership for an extended period and this has been detrimental to the staff team. In the absence of a permanent manager, the staff have lacked the necessary oversight, guidance and support to work effectively with the children. There have been failings in management oversight and monitoring of the home. Consequently, areas of weakness have not been well identified and decisive action has not been taken to resolve any issues. These shortfalls mean that there are significant gaps in the care and safety provided to the children living in the home.

On occasions, staff duty rotas fail to accurately reflect the actual staff on duty. In addition, when staff have covered shortfalls in the rota, records do not include their full name or any other information to indicate who they are. This prevents a clear audit trail of who is working in the home. During discussions with the manager, she accepted that the rotas did not contain all of the required information. The lack of transparency regarding who is on duty potentially places children at risk and compromises the continuity of care.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made to ensure that Ofsted is notified without

delay of any significant event at the home. This has not been met. On 6 June 2018, a child climbed on to a motorway bridge and this resulted in the traffic being brought to a standstill by the police. Managers and staff failed to notify Ofsted of this serious incident. Following this incident, staff and managers also failed to review the strategies to reduce the likelihood of such incidents occurring again. This failure does not ensure that children are safely cared for in the home.

Records of supervision show that staff are not receiving regular supervision. Given the number of new staff who are working through their competencies, regular supervision and support are crucial to their development. Consequently, despite the best efforts of the staff team, it is unable to provide good and safe care to children.

The home currently does not meet the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose. During March, April and May 2018, there were several occasions when there were insufficient staff on duty to meet the individual needs of the children. This meant that staff were unable to give children the attention and support that they required. Consequently, this has contributed to an increase in children causing damage in the home and being aggressive towards staff. In addition, this does not enable the children to build positive relationships with a consistent staff team and has had an adverse effect on their overall care and experiences.

The management team has failed to ensure that it uses monitoring systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided at the home. A quality of care report was completed for the period of October 2017 to April 2018. However, this has the previous registered manager's name on it. Managers were unclear who had completed the report. A copy of the report has not been sent to Ofsted as required within agreed timescales.

Managers have not actively challenged or raised their concerns when they do not agree with the local authority plans for a child. For example, inspectors were told that the local authority plan for a child was to secure a foster placement. However, in the providers view, the child was not ready to live with a family. The manager has not requested a care planning meeting to discuss this child's placement needs. This means that the child could potentially be moved to a placement that will not meet their needs.

The home is not maintained to a good standard. There has been significant damage to several bedrooms, with plasterboard covering holes in the walls. One child's window has been boarded up due to it being smashed. The lounge lacks soft furnishings and gives the impression of being uncared for. In the back garden, there is extensive damage to the fencing. This means that children live in a home that is not welcoming or homely.

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: 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

Inspectors

Michelle Bacon: social care inspector

Paul Robinson: social care inspector

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