

# SC368032

Registered provider: Constant Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children who have social and emotional difficulties. The home is privately owned. The registered manager has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management services for children and young people. She has been in post since July 2015.

**Inspection dates:** 1 to 2 August 2018

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **inadequate**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

**Date of last inspection:** 21 August 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/08/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
15/11/2016	Full	Good
04/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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>Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met.</p> <p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; and must ensure that staff, 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(b)(c))</p>	16/09/2018
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care and that they are given appropriate advocacy support. (Regulation 7(2)(a)(iv)(b)(iii))</p>	16/09/2018
<p>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 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. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i))</p>	16/09/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(2)(c))</p>	16/09/2018
The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory	16/09/2018

information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(3)(d))*	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate professional development. (Regulation 33(4)(a))</p> <p>In particular, this is to ensure that all staff receive training in physical intervention and in the administration of medication.</p>	16/09/2018
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of a use of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure, a description of the measure and its duration, details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the use of the measure and the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii))	16/09/2018
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. When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1), (2))	16/09/2018

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

Children's overall experience and progress have been significantly compromised because managers and staff do not always prioritise children's welfare and safety.

Children are not given sufficient opportunities to express their views or to be involved in decisions that affect them. For example, children's placement plans are not designed in a child-friendly way which considers a child's age and understanding. Consequently, children do not find their care plan easy to understand, and this means that children are not able to contribute to the planning, or the review of planning, for their care.

Staff do not maintain clear and up-to-date records about children. For example, one child's record refers to the child requiring a Halal diet. However, this is an error that has not been rectified. This leaves staff ill-informed in how to provide individualised care for children.

Children have opportunities to participate in activities that support their interests. For example, staff have supported one child to go swimming.

Children benefit from regular key-working sessions. These sessions help children to reflect on their progress and to consider their future needs. However, staff fail to ensure that regular house meetings take place. In the past six months, only three meetings have taken place. As a result, children's wishes and feelings are not central to decisions made about the everyday running of the home.

Positively, staff make sure that children have access to local and specialist health services. Managers and staff work well with health colleagues to promote children's emotional and mental health. However, managers and staff do not ensure that other areas of children's needs are equally well met. Despite a requirement being raised at the last inspection for a child to receive advocacy support, no referral has been made. This unacceptable delay means that the child continues to be unable to exercise his right to express his views through an advocate.

Staff are attentive and caring and aim to offer children a nurturing and stable environment. However, despite a previous requirement being raised to ensure that the home is designed, furnished and maintained to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health, ongoing shortfalls continue to put children at risk. For example, staff did not ensure that prompt action was taken to make a bedroom window lock safe after a window restrictor was broken. The inspector also observed a sharp screw protruding from a wardrobe in one child's bedroom. These shortfalls leave children vulnerable to physical harm.

Staff work with the placing authorities to ensure that children are able to maintain relationships with their friends and families. When contact restrictions are in place, staff clearly explain these to the specific child.

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

Managers do not operate safe recruitment practice. For example, on one occasion there was a serious lack of professional curiosity and a failure to ensure that a suitable risk assessment is in place when employing a member of staff. As a result, children are placed at unnecessary risk of potential harm.

Managers fail to ensure that staff conduct accurate risk assessments that reflect the needs of children. For example, one child's risk assessment does not contain key information about identified risks associated with online safety. This practice means that staff do not have accurate information that enables them to manage risk effectively.

Managers do not adequately review the suitability of the location of the home. This is because there is an absence of collaborative work in the preparation of the locality risk assessment. The assessment does not fully consider the impact that potential risks in the immediate or local vicinity may have on children's safety and well-being. This places the children at further risk of harm.

Managers continue to fail to ensure that all staff have up-to-date training that enables them to administer medication and to use the home's approved method of physical restraint. Despite this being a shortfall at the previous inspection, and that it resulted in a requirement being made, the inspector found that two members of staff have not received the required training. One of these members of staff had recently led a physical restraint of a child. This ongoing failure in securing training is unacceptable, and places staff and children at risk of injury.

Since the last inspection, there have been some developments in the recording of physical restraints. On occasions when restraint is necessary to prevent serious harm, records now indicate that children are provided with the opportunity to talk about the incident. However, these improvements have not been good enough to meet the requirement raised at last inspection, because the records continue to lack clarity. For example, two of the most recent physical restraint records indicate that the child concerned did not want to be involved in the debriefing process yet the record then indicates that the child was 'happy with what happened'. There is an absence of detail or analysis around how staff reached this conclusion. This lack of information hinders managers when reviewing the use of restraint to ensure that it is proportionate and in the best interest of the child concerned.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

Internal and external quality assurance processes have failed to identify ongoing shortfalls in the home. For example, these processes have failed to pick up that three requirements raised at the last full inspection in August 2017 are still unmet. These failures have created significant delay in one child receiving advocacy support. Staff are waiting for training in the care of medicines and in the home's approved method for physical restraint. Furthermore, there are still shortfalls in the quality of recording when

staff physically restrain children.

Partnership working arrangements between managers, staff and some external agencies are not good enough. The registered manager has not challenged other professionals when she considers that their actions have fallen short of acceptable standards of care or support. For example, the manager has failed to challenge the police effectively around their lack of input into the home's locality risk assessment. In addition, the registered manager has failed to escalate concerns that a local authority did not share full information relating to the risks faced by one child prior to their admission. This failure led to the child being poorly matched and an evitable placement breakdown.

Staff do not receive regular or good-quality supervision that focuses on the needs of the children. The lack of management oversight means that there have been missed opportunities to help to ensure that staff have regular supervision which focuses on improving their practice.

Managers acknowledge the shortfalls identified in this inspection and have a vision for future improvements to the home. This includes developments to streamline children's records to make them more accessible to both staff and children. Managers have appropriately made the decision to not admit any new children at the present time.

## **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 difference 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:** SC368032

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

**Registered provider:** Constant Child Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** Beecham Business Centre, Beecham Business Park,  
Northgate, Aldridge, West Midlands WS9 8TZ

**Responsible individual:** Barry Edwards

**Registered manager:** Lisa Sherwood

## Inspector

Lisa Walsh, social care inspector

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