

SC487702

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children who have difficulty with managing their emotions and behaviour.

The registered manager left in December 2017. Another manager was appointed, but left before they were registered. There are currently interim management arrangements in place, but there is no registered manager.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 August 2018

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| Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account | requires improvement to be good |
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| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
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| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | inadequate |
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 11 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 11/10/2017 | Full | Good |
| 23/03/2017 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |
| 28/04/2016 | Full | Good |
| 23/11/2015 | Interim | Not judged |

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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (d))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to working with the local authority's designated officer to agree the steps necessary to complete an investigation in respect of a member of staff who has left the organisation.</p> | 30/09/2018 |
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children's bedrooms are clean and that any damage is repaired.</p> | 30/09/2018 |
| The leadership and management standard is that the registered | 30/09/2018 |

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| <p>person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff do not work alone until they have a suitable level of experience and skill.</p> | |
| <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; and</p> <p>the registered provider—</p> <p>is an organisation or a partnership;</p> <p>does not satisfy regulation 28; or</p> <p>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—</p> <p>the name of the person so appointed; and</p> <p>the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(2)(a)(b))</p> | 14/10/2018 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))</p> | 14/10/2018 |

Recommendations

- Staff should keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of the time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

- The registered person must ensure that the necessary support is given to children to enable them to access their education or training. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.13)

In particular this relates to establishing bedtime and getting up routines so that children are ready and on time for their education or training.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Some children have made significant progress at the home. However, there are some shortfalls and the home has not had a registered manager since December 2017.

The staff provide individualised, nurturing care for the children and have positive relationships with them. This care helps the children to feel valued and engaged at the home. An external professional spoke about the 'real success' that the staff had in working with a child who has since returned to her family. A child said that he gets on really well with the staff and can talk to them, and that they are 'almost like a second family'.

The staff have helped some children to engage in education and take exams. They have advocated for the children to help maintain work experience placements, and have ensured that suitable education plans are in place. However, while staff recognise the need to help one child maintain sleeping and waking routines so that his education and work placements are not jeopardised, there is a lack of clarity over the steps that the staff need to take to achieve this. Without this routine, the good work that the staff have done may be ineffective.

One child's bedroom had some damaged furniture and required cleaning. Despite the room being checked by staff, these issues had not been identified. The staff have missed opportunities to help the child understand the importance of looking after his bedroom and maintaining good hygiene.

The children take part in a wide range of enjoyable activities such as go-carting, trampolining, cinema trips and visits to car shows with the staff. These are important in engaging the children, building their self-esteem and enabling them to have enjoyable childhood experiences.

Each child has a memory box for the staff to keep things in, so that the children can have mementos to remind them of their childhoods and their time at the home. These boxes are not always being used effectively. For example, one child who has been at the home for four months and experienced lots of good activities only had three photographs in his box. This is missing an opportunity to provide memorabilia from significant life events for the child.

The staff make sure that the children's moves into the home are as positive as they can be. A placing social worker said that a child's move in was good, and a commissioner said that the responsible individual is child centred and very considerate in regard to matching the children at the home. Moves for children in care are significant and potentially traumatic events, so the work that is done to make them positive is important for the children.

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

Some children at the home have taken part in very risky activities. However, the staff do what they can to help the children understand the risks and become safer.

One child has been missing from care frequently. The staff have taken appropriate action when he has gone missing, including trying to find or contact him and, when necessary, reporting him as missing. The staff have been trying to engage him in activities to reduce the frequency of his missing-from-home episodes. Having previously been missing several times a week, he has not been missing for the last two weeks. This shows encouraging progress. The child said that he knows that staff are concerned about him when he goes missing. The staff call him and message him. He believes that they do the right things, even though he may not like it or appreciate it at the time.

The good relationships that the staff have with the children help the staff to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour in the children. A placing social worker spoke of how a child struggled with not getting what he wanted, but is now beginning to understand how to negotiate with the staff. The child said that the staff challenge his behaviour 'and don't give in'.

There is an effective relationship with the local police community support officer, who visits the home regularly. With staff support, he has been able to speak to a child about some high-risk behaviours. Some of the high-risk behaviours have recently reduced. The placing social worker said that she could not ask much more of the staff, who have done their best to keep the child away from bad influences.

The responsible individual has reported matters to the designated officer, but currently the relationship is not working effectively. There are some efforts on both parts to resolve this, but to date they have not been effective. There is a lack of clarity over an investigation into a member of staff who has left the home. It is important that the relationship is repaired, and that the issues relating to this ex-member of staff are concluded satisfactorily. Poor or ineffective relationships between such significant people have the potential to limit the way that the system safeguards children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager left the home in December 2017. A new manager was appointed but, following some concerns about her practice, left the home. Currently, the

deputy manager is acting up and the responsible individual is overseeing the home. This has led to some lack of consistency. For example, a number of supervision and appraisal records are missing.

Supervision takes place regularly, meaning that the few missing records will have less impact. However, the missing annual appraisal records mean that the assessment of staff members' ongoing suitability and their development needs are not clearly identified.

New staff have an induction to familiarise themselves with their new role. The staff have access to a good range of training opportunities to help them meet the individual children's needs.

There are some experienced staff at the home, but a recently appointed member of staff with very limited childcare experience has been working alone on some shifts. The member of staff is not yet suitably experienced for this and, while he has access to on-call support, it does leave the potential for inappropriate practice or mistakes that could affect children's care. Agency staff are sometimes used, but this is a consistent group of staff, which prevents too much disruption from occurring in the children's lives.

Managers and leaders at the home have children at the centre of their practice and want them to do well. There is evidence that the staff and managers listen to the views of children, and this has an impact on children's plans and care. Examples of children contributing to their care planning include the children being involved in decisions about where they went on holiday, and the activities that they take part in.

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: SC487702

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Registered provider address: Orchard House, 1 Old Convent Orchard, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3PQ

Responsible individual: Caroline Fonjock

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Clive Lucas: social care inspector

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