

1247390

Registered provider: Partnerships In Care 1 Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home can provide care for up to eight children and young adults. Its specialism is to provide care to children and young adults who have mental health difficulties and who self-harm.

The home is part of a large national private organisation.

The registered manager has been absent from her post since July 2018. The deputy manager has become the interim manager.

The home is also registered with the Care Quality Commission.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 September 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers inadequate

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: 5 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/07/2017	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
<p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <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>understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child’s welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking account of the child’s background;</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice;</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p>	<p>22/11/2018</p>

<p>meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (1) (a) (b) (2) (a) (b) (i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (vii) (ix) (c) (i) (ii))</p>	
<p>9: The enjoyment and achievement standard</p> <p>The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.</p> <p>(Regulation 9 (1))</p>	22/11/2018
<p>12: The protection of children standard</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—</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2) (e))</p>	22/11/2018
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</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’s workforce provides continuity of care to</p>	22/11/2018

<p>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) (e) (f) (h))</p>	
<p>14: The care planning standard</p> <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose.</p> <p>(Regulation 14 (1) (a) (b) (2) (a))</p>	22/11/2018
<p>25: Fire precautions</p> <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire.</p> <p>(Regulation 25 (1) (d))</p>	22/11/2018
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p>	22/11/2018

<p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (1) (3) (d))</p>	
<p>33: Employment of staff</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p> <p>(Regulation 33 (4) (b))</p>	<p>22/11/2018</p>

Inspection judgements

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

Children do not always have good-quality experiences or make good progress. These weaknesses were evident at the inspection and had already been identified by the interim manager. She has a good understanding of the areas that require improvement. However, the implementation of the improvement work is in the early stages of development. As a result, the impact of this work is untested.

The quality of the environment has deteriorated since the previous inspection. Children are happy with their bedrooms, which are personalised. However, staff do not check children's bedrooms effectively to ensure that they are always well maintained. Repairs and maintenance issues take too long to be resolved.

In parts, the appearance of the home looks institutional and some practices are restrictive. Examples of this include:

- Keypad locks are located on all external doors.
- Toilets on the ground floor are kept locked and only for use by staff.
- The kitchen door has a spyhole in it and staff do not know why.
- Too many notices on the walls are not for children.
- Children have allocated laundry days.
- Salt and pepper sachets are provided rather than a homelier alternative.
- Some staff use institutional language to describe the children and their work with them.

The interim manager and clinical team recognise these weaknesses and are planning to make changes.

Too many adults use this home as their 'workplace' and its identity as a home is lost. Clinicians, administrative workers and senior managers all use the space in the home

regularly. These visitors enter the home without knocking. While this is carried out with good intention, it creates a busy environment which does not suit the needs of the children.

The interim manager plans to improve children's records as she knows that they lack important information about children. Currently, there is not enough information about children's goals, outcomes and the progress that they make.

Children have some access to activities such as horse riding or going out to a cafe. However, children's access to these types of activities requires improvement. Children are required to attend a planning meeting early each morning. Children who do not attend this meeting do not always have good opportunities to join in with activities later in the day. The interim manager identifies this as a weakness.

Staff conduct 'observations' on children frequently throughout the day. They say that this is a safety measure. Currently, all children are observed every 15 minutes. The rationale for all children to be observed this frequently is unclear as some children attend college and work placements independently and they do not receive this same level of monitoring when outside of the home.

Some children attend college or school and do well. Other children find it difficult to engage in learning due to their current health needs. One child is particularly resistant to engage as notice was served on her placement three months ago. Leaders and managers are continuing to work with the placing authority to remedy this situation.

Children have good support from a clinical team that includes psychologists, psychiatrists and occupational therapists. These professionals also support staff to better understand the needs of children. Currently, the clinical team's expertise is not used effectively to help managers when they assess children's needs prior to them moving into the home. The clinical team manager and the interim manager recognise that this is not good practice and have plans to improve it.

Children do not raise any concerns about the quality of their care. The staff team offers attentive care and support to children. Positive relationships develop between children and staff.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Child protection records that pre-date the interim manager are poor and do not comprehensively describe the actions taken and the outcomes. Since the interim manager has been in post, the quality of child protection records has started to improve. This area for improvement is included in the home's improvement plan.

Child protection concerns are dealt with more effectively since the interim manager started in post. Information is passed appropriately to social workers and safeguarding professionals. However, none of the senior managers in this organisation who oversee

the management of child protection concerns have completed safeguarding training at the required level. Leaders and managers know about this weakness and are currently arranging for staff to complete the training.

The current system for recording significant incidents requires improvement. Monitoring is hindered as the incident records are stored together with records from another home within the same company. In addition, there is no facility to filter incident records by date. This makes identifying trends and patterns difficult. The interim manager does monitor incident records, but the impact of this monitoring is not evidenced well.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding about how to support children who self-harm. Staff respond sensitively when children hurt themselves and provide good care and appropriate treatment. Most children visit the local hospitals frequently for treatment following incidents of self-harm. Despite this, the interim manager is yet to establish formal links with the local hospitals.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When children do leave the home without permission, staff go with them, talk to them and try to encourage them to return home. At times, children become highly distressed. This has meant that the police have appropriately supported staff to help the children to return home safely.

Fire drills take place regularly. However, the interim manager cannot demonstrate that all children and staff have been involved in an evacuation practice as required. Fire evacuation records do not provide sufficient information about what occurred during the drill. The interim manager has plans to ensure that information from fire evacuation drills inform children's personal emergency evacuation plans.

The quality of staff recruitment processes is inconsistent. Staff do not start work before references and disclosure and barring checks are obtained. However, leaders and managers do not always ensure that they obtain all of the information required about a person before they recruit them. This includes when they recruit staff through an agency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager has been absent from her post since July 2018. The deputy manager is currently the interim manager and has day-to-day management oversight of the home. Organisational change is not managed well and there is a lack of investment from the organisation. Until recently, the interim manager did not have access to staff personnel and supervision records. In addition, important documents are missing such as child protection records, the workforce plan and training records.

Leaders and managers have not effectively implemented the statement of purpose. The purpose, ethos and identity of the home are confused. The interim manager is aware of this weakness and is meeting with senior leaders to address it.

Staff are not provided with a company mobile phone to use when they are on duty. It is

expected that they will always have their personal mobile with them to ensure that they can seek support. Leaders and managers have not thought about alternative ways of providing staff with essential resources to carry out their roles effectively.

The interim manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. An improvement plan addresses most of the weaknesses found at this inspection. Currently, the interim manager has not had enough time to implement and embed all of the changes needed.

Most staff, apart from the interim manager, receive regular supervision and say that they feel supported in their roles. The interim manager cannot measure the quality of this supervision as records are poor. The clinical team provides weekly clinical supervision to staff, which facilitates reflective discussions and learning.

An online training system enables staff to access essential training for their roles. The interim manager can track staff progress with this training. However, currently, there is no system to monitor and track face-to-face training courses that staff attend. For example, the interim manager is aware that all staff attended safeguarding training, but she is unable to confirm when this took place.

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: 1247390

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Partnerships In Care 1 Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Imperial Place, Maxwell Road, Borehamwood
WD6 1JN

Responsible individual: Clive Coombs

Registered manager: Alison Hudson

Inspector

Nicola Lownds: social care inspector

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