

SC439535

Registered provider: Pebbles Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is approved to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of five children and/or young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is currently providing care and accommodation for three. The manager has been registered since August 2013.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 October 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 **requires improvement to be good**

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: 10 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: the home has been subject to compliance notices and a restriction of accommodation. The restriction of accommodation was lifted following a monitoring visit, and the compliance notices were followed up at this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2018	Monitoring visit	Not judged
08/08/2018	Full	Inadequate
05/03/2018	Full	Good
09/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/09/2016	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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that staff–</p> <p>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;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i)(v))</p> <p>Staff should establish contact with the parents of any children or young people that the children and young people living at the home visit, particularly if they are returning home under the influence of substances. Staff should also ensure that they are checking on these young people through the night for any adverse impact of the substances used, in line with the home's risk assessments.</p>	23/11/2018
<p>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(2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, staff should ensure that they read, and sign that they have read, the guidance provided by the manager in relation to safeguarding practice.</p>	23/11/2018

<p>The requirements are that–</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the management should ensure that any issues noted on staff’s Disclosure and Barring Service checks and/or references are explored so that the management is assured that the staff members are safe to work with vulnerable children, references are maintained on staff files in full, and any gaps in employment history are discussed and verified.</p>	<p>23/11/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if–</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(b))</p>	<p>23/11/2018</p>

Recommendations

- It is good practice for a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions to be kept and to ensure that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.4)

Inspection judgements

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

The children and young people are happy. They have good relationships with the staff and can talk to them about any concerns that they may have. The children and young people feel nurtured and say that the staff care about them unconditionally, helping them to feel valued.

Staff are persistent and encourage the children and young people to take part in their education. Good support from the staff, which involved them attending with one child for the first week, enabled him to successfully transition and settle into secondary school. However, not all of the children and young people engage in their educational studies and therefore their outcomes are mixed.

Some young people do not engage with specialist services to help them to address their mental health and substance misuse issues. Staff make several attempts to engage them but are often not successful. They regularly discuss these important issues in key-working sessions, helping young people to better understand the risks, but the lack of specialist input diminishes the potential for positive and timely outcomes. However, when young people feel ready they let staff know, who in turn make appointments to speed up any intervention.

Not all of the children and young people are engaging in education, therefore their outcomes are mixed. The support that staff provided to one child helped him to transition to secondary school. Staff managed this sensitively, with a good level of hands-on support, enabling the child to attend school unsupported. This has increased the child's confidence and has led to better relationships with the staff. All three of the children and young people have made some progress since admission to the home. However, more focused work on independence, personal hygiene and maintaining friendships is welcomed by one placing social worker to enable the placing authority to start considering future transitions.

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

The staff know the children and young people well. They have a good insight into the risks posed both to and by the children and young people. The staff keep the placing social workers informed of any incidents and write regular summaries about the child's or young person's progress. Safeguarding concerns are shared with the local police, who support them in giving strong and consistent messages to deter children's and young people's negative behaviours. Consequently, the children and young people have developed good relationships with the police and regularly disclose important information that the police act upon to make the home and community a safer place.

Missing from home incidents have reduced significantly. The young person who has

previously gone missing states, 'I don't feel the need to go missing anymore. I like it here and I know staff really do care about me.' Physical interventions have also reduced. The child involves likes staff to hold him until he is fully calm. This physical intervention makes him feel safe and mitigates the need for police intervention. Staff rarely pursue any criminal charges against the children and/or young people, and are nurturing and sensitive in view of children's and young people's history prior to living at this home.

Staff are not always aware of young people's friendships in the local community and have not always made links to the families that the young people visit. This does not help the staff to understand the potential risks to young people, and neither does it enable them to safeguard others.

Risk assessments have been updated and now clarify the expectations of staff on how they should respond in most situations. However, staff do not always check through the night on young people who may be at risk of harm through substance misuse. This is contrary to the risk assessment which advises staff to make regular checks through the night if children present as under the influence of substances.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The committed manager is appropriately qualified and is supported by a like-minded deputy. The two seniors in post complement the management team and, together, they are working towards raising the standards and quality of care. The staff team includes a mix of existing and new staff, and they work together well with the best interests of children and young people at the forefront of their work.

The last few months have been a stressful time for the management and staff team, but the compliance notices and requirements from the last inspection have been met.

The staff are keen to work together to embed new learning and practices in line with recent training. Visual guidance in the form of a flow chart on the office wall supports their learning and enables a speedier response to allegations, including peer-on-peer abuse and other safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding scenarios are covered in supervisions and discussed in team meetings, helping staff to keep their knowledge refreshed. 'County lines' and safeguarding training has been helpful for those who have attended, and others have dates on which to attend in November, and Home Office guidance has been shared to keep them all informed in the interim.

The regulator was not notified of a recent serious incident involving aggressive and criminal behaviours. Although the police helped to de-escalate the situation, this does not enable the regulator to maintain close monitoring and oversight.

Internal monitoring systems have been reviewed, and the managers now undertake a weekly audit. This will assist them in writing the bi-annual summary of the quality of care and provide them with better oversight and management grip of the current gaps

in practice. It should also, in principle, speed up their response to shortfalls. The introduction of a senior staff meeting should also strengthen the management team and help it to address the current issues at the home.

New-style supervisions take place monthly, but following the meetings the supervisees do not receive a copy of the minutes. This does not support them to reflect on any learning and development, nor does it assist the supervisors to hold staff to account or to address performance issues.

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: SC439535

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pebbles Care

Registered provider address: 2 Wyther Lane, Leeds LS5 3BT

Responsible individual: Amanda Quinn

Registered manager: Kimberley Crabtree

Inspector

Parveen Hussain, social care inspector

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