

SC462729

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to four children who have experienced significant trauma resulting in a range of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The manager was registered in October 2018.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 November 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: 18 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/12/2017	Full	Good
07/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/08/2016	Full	Good
26/01/2016	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(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>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—</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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p>	07/12/2018
<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—</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that any allegation against a member of staff is promptly referred to the designated officer in the local authority.</p>	29/11/2018
<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>	07/12/2018

<p>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)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that impact assessments give consideration to known risks associated with all of the children and the potential impact that these have on each child.</p>	
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that risk assessments demonstrate the need for all of the monitoring devices used at the home and that written consent is provided by each child's placing authority for the use of door alarms.</p>	31/12/2018
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a</p>	31/03/2019

<p>home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, provide staff with training in managing self-harm and understanding county lines issues.</p>	31/01/2019
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the missing child policy”) setting out—</p> <p>the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and</p> <p>the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff make appropriate efforts to contact and locate children when they go missing.</p>	29/11/2018
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))</p>	29/11/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the</p>	31/01/2019

independent person requires.

The independent person must produce a report about a visit which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—

children are effectively safeguarded; and
the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.
(Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a)(4)(a)(b))

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Consider how a more flexible approach can safely be taken when considering visits by the child to friends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.18)

Inspection judgements

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

There are several shortfalls in safeguarding and leadership that have the potential to compromise the safety of the children. However, there are also strengths and children are making some progress.

The manager undertakes impact assessments when considering new children for the home. These assessments do not sufficiently consider known risks or the child's cultural background. As a result, the assessments do not offer a clear analysis of the potential effect of the move on the child or on other children at the home.

The home's interior is looking tired in places, with damage to the kitchen floor and the door leading to the garden. Decoration is sparse, with limited homely touches. The children's bedroom doors are alarmed. This has not formally been agreed with placing authorities.

One child attends school some distance from the home. The staff plan with the child to

enable her to meet with friends. However, the distance and staffing arrangements limit opportunities for flexibility and spontaneous socialisation.

The children said that the staff care about them. They feel listened to. One child said, 'They [the staff] just care so much about every young person.' Another child said, 'The staff are helpful and caring.'

The children have access to psychologists. The assistant psychologist has a good working relationship with the staff and the children. Some children are beginning to make tentative steps into therapeutic support. This is progress for them.

The children attend education. This includes children who have previously struggled to attend. One child has just begun to attend work experience.

One child's behaviour has recently improved significantly. There has been a substantial reduction in the number of physical interventions involving the child.

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

The approach to risk management and risk assessment is not good enough. Some significant risk assessments were unclear, for example in relation to self-harm. Some risk assessments have not been updated despite risks having substantially changed, for example children who did not have free time who are now having free time. Some assessments contained conflicting information. Therefore, risks are not fully considered or reflected in risk assessments. Consequently, the guidance to staff is out of date and inaccurate.

In one instance, a child made an allegation within a complaint and reiterated this allegation in a key-work session. The previous manager did not recognise this as an allegation, did not inform the designated officer and did not inform Ofsted. The independent person noticed this but did not advise the manager to refer the allegation to the designated officer or to Ofsted. This led to the previous manager undertaking his own investigation six weeks after the initial disclosure and dismissing the concern without consultation with external agencies. As a result, the management of this allegation did not protect the child.

When children go missing, the staff report them as missing to the police. The staff ensure that local authorities provide the children with a return interview and keep a copy of this on file. However, the staff response to children going missing is not strong enough when children go missing at night-time. There is a lack of effort to contact the children once the police have been informed. This conflicts with missing from home protocols and conveys a lack of care towards the children. In addition, the home's protocol states that staff should take a grab bag with them if a child goes missing. Some staff were unaware of where this bag is kept. This significantly compromises their ability to follow protocols.

There are times when the staff need to physically intervene to keep children safe. These interventions tend to be short and are proportionate. However, the records of these interventions are at times unclear, with some entries undated. The records do not provide a good overview of what has happened and what has been learned. As such, they are of limited benefit to the child and staff.

Children said that they can talk to staff and that the staff listen to them. The children said that if they are worried or upset there are people who they can confide in. The children feel safe.

Children can make complaints. The new manager responds to children's concerns constructively and professionally.

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

Since the last inspection, a new manager has been registered and is working towards an appropriate qualification. A new deputy manager has also recently started. The new management team is realistic about the need for improvement.

While the quality of case records is variable, the management team has a good understanding of the children.

The staff do not receive training in some important areas. For example, the staff are supporting children who self-harm, but training is not provided in this area. The staff and the management team do not have training in understanding county lines despite this being a concern in the county. Additionally, some staff who should have a level 3 qualification do not yet have one. These training gaps do not equip staff effectively in their roles.

The arrangements for supervision and appraisal of staff are inconsistent. One member of staff has had no appraisal in the last year and only two supervisions in the last six months. This does not provide the staff with the support that they need or enable managers to address practice issues.

An independent person visits the home each month. They complete a report based on their visits. However, only two of the last 11 visits have included consultation with families. None have included any feedback from external professionals. Visits sometimes occur when children are not present at the home as they are attending school. Three of the last four reports between June 2018 and September 2018 do not include consultation with children. In addition, reports do not include a clear view from the independent person about whether the children are safeguarded effectively. This reduces the extra safeguards that the visits are intended to provide.

Feedback from professionals is consistently positive. Comments included:

- 'The staff are very attentive. I am very happy with how [my child] is getting on.'
- 'I think that they have been brilliant for [child].'

- 'From where [the child] has come from to where she is now, there is a vast difference.'
- 'When we first went there, [the child] was so happy. I saw [the child] smile for the first 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 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: SC462729

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Ltd

Registered provider address: Spirare Limited, Mey House, Bridport Road, Poundbury, Dorset DT1 3QY

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Melissa Thomas

Inspector

Ashley Hinson: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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