

1236916

Registered provider: Utopia Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private company. The company owns two other children's homes. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since June 2016.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2019

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	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Inadequate
10/02/2017	Full	Requires improvement

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>10: The health and well-being standard</p> <p>The health and well-being standard is that–</p> <p>the health needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that staff help each child to</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff continue to explore ways to support the children to cease smoking and misusing substances.</p>	31/03/2019
<p>11: The positive relationships standard</p> <p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on–</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p>	

<p>that staff–</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(ix))</p>	
<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 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, undertake a management review of events that led up to children going missing from the home without staff's knowledge, and act on the findings of this review to ensure that children are always kept safe.</p>	<p>31/03/2019</p>
<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>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1), (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that there is regular monitoring and</p>	<p>31/03/2019</p>

<p>scrutiny of children's safety and behaviour support plans, risk assessments, reports from education providers, incident reports and concerning behaviour reports.</p>	
<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 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>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 each child.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that all staff receive training in drug and alcohol awareness and substance misuse.</p>	<p>31/03/2019</p>

Inspection judgements

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

The overall experiences and progress of children require improvement. This is because the action taken to address the widespread weaknesses that were identified at the last full inspection is in its infancy and not yet embedded in practice.

Since the last inspection, a child moved out of the home. This was because senior managers decided that staff could not keep the child safe.

Staff are developing positive relationships with children. Because of this work, children are not spending as much time in their bedrooms and are engaging in activities in the home and in the wider community. They are benefiting from meaningful activities with staff that include leisure, social and educational opportunities. Photograph albums record the activities that children enjoy.

Children are engaging in education, and the home receives weekly updates from the education providers in relation to the outcomes of the day and the children's successes. Staff are supporting a child in seeking a part-time job in the local community.

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

At the last inspection, the staff team failed to engage effectively with children in supporting them to manage their emotions and feelings. Since the last inspection, staff have received in-house training in relation to this. As a result, staff are more confident and are setting boundaries and ensuring that there is a consistent approach to managing children's behaviours. Staff say that the training, coaching and support that they received have been helpful and have improved their practice. However, these skills are yet to become embedded.

Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in children being involved in serious incidents in the home and in the wider community. The use of physical intervention and children going missing from home have also reduced. Moreover, children have not left the home without staff knowing.

Despite the actions taken by staff to educate children in the dangers of smoking and substance misuse, they have not been entirely effective, and children continue to smoke and misuse substances. Leaders and managers have raised this as a concern to the placing authorities, and more work is required to support children to stop this unsafe behaviour.

Since the last inspection, two external professionals have made referrals to the designated officer about practices in the home. Leaders and managers have worked effectively together with safeguarding agencies and professionals in relation to these

matters to ensure that children are safe.

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

This home was judged inadequate at the last full inspection in December 2018.

Since that inspection, senior leaders and managers have taken effective action and devised a comprehensive plan designed to address the widespread shortfalls. They have consulted the staff team, provided in-house training and brought staff in from another home within the organisation to support the registered manager. Senior managers have reviewed the staffing structure in the home and have appointed a deputy manager to support the home.

The improvements identified in the action plan are in their early stages of implementation and need to be embedded in practice. In addition, regular monitoring and scrutiny of several records, including children's safety and behaviour support plans, risk assessments, reports from education providers and incident and concerning behaviour records, are required so that managers can evaluate practices in the home effectively.

A requirement made at the last inspection was for the registered manager to undertake an internal investigation into incidents when children left the home without staff's knowledge. The review undertaken does not include all the incidents when children left the home without staff knowing. Failure to undertake a comprehensive management review of these events does not demonstrate reflective practice and fails to establish if there are lessons to be learned to ensure that children are always kept safe.

Staff speak well of the support that they have received from leaders and managers, and are able to demonstrate how the recent training, support and guidance are improving their practice. However, not all staff have received specific training in relation to drug and alcohol awareness and substance misuse, despite supporting children who have these needs.

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: 1236916

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Utopia Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Hazlewoods, Windsor House, Bayshill Road,
Cheltenham GL50 3AT

Responsible individual: Louis Stuart-Kelso

Registered manager: Leon James

Inspector

David Kidner, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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