

# 1241407

Registered provider: Evergreen Children's Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The home has been without a registered manager since January 2018. The current manager was appointed on 25 January 2019. She is yet to make an application to register with Ofsted.

**Inspection dates:** 8 to 9 April 2019

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>inadequate</b> |
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|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | inadequate |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|

|                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | inadequate |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** 30 November 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** declined in effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement      |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 30/11/2018      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness |
| 26/06/2018      | Full            | Good                      |
| 16/03/2018      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness |
| 25/04/2017      | 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>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult;</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(2)(b)(vi)(c)(i)(ii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 31 May 2019 |
| <p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(iv))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 31 May 2019 |
| <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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12</p> | 31 May 2019 |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) *                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |             |
| <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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; best met; and 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)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) *</p> | 31 May 2019 |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. 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. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(a))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 31 May 2019 |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(f))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 31 May 2019 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 31 May 2019 |

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| In particular, the registered manager is to ensure that staff attend training in line with their professional development. The registered manager is to receive regular supervision and have a copy of the supervision record. (Regulation 33(4)(b)) *                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |             |
| The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. (Regulation 33(1)(a)(b)) *                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 31 May 2019 |
| The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) | 31 May 2019 |
| <p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 31 May 2019 |

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the

children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- Homes set up for emergency placements as indicated and detailed in their Statement of Purpose will require sufficient staff trained and skilled in the admission and care of children, where their full background may not be known. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.6)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

At the time of this inspection, there are two young people living at the home.

A lack of leadership and management oversight of care plans means that young people do not have clear goals to work towards. Young people are not aware of their progress and/or the targets that they are meant to be working towards. For example, one young person who should be working towards semi-independence does not have a clear plan for developing his life skills in readiness for adulthood and, instead, chooses to spend a large period of the day in bed.

Young people are not in education, training or employment. Managers have not done enough to escalate concerns over delays in young people accessing the right help and support to promote their learning.

Staff do not hold regular key-working sessions with young people to promote their welfare. As a result, young people miss out on receiving help to understand the risks of smoking, the importance of attending medical appointments and understanding the risks of substance misuse.

Managers fail to ensure that young people receive care from a consistent staff team. High staff turnover has led to frequent changes in staff. Since the interim inspection in November 2018, the entire staff team has changed. The home has relied on temporary staff to cover shifts. Changes in staff have had a negative impact on the standard of care that the home provides to young people. For example, one young person told the

inspector that when he first arrived at the home he felt that staff did not care about him.

Staff do not always ensure that young people are cared for in a nurturing and homely environment. For example, one young person's bedroom has no curtains and the blind that was in place is broken. The entire property needs redecoration and minor repairs. This failure to address environmental factors detracts from young people living in a pleasant and homely environment.

Staff ensure that young people are supported to maintain links with people who are important to them.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate**

Managers failed to assess a young person's needs prior to his admission. This is despite the young person having a history of significant risk-taking behaviour, including being involved in a high number of incidents of going missing from care, being associated with gangs and engaging in criminal activities. None of these known risks were considered in the home's impact assessment. This significant failure to fully assess a young person's history compromises the safety of the young person and other young people living in the home.

Managers and staff fail to ensure that risk assessments are kept up to date and are an accurate record. Risk assessments and behaviour management plans are often contradictory of each other. This leaves staff without accurate information necessary to ensure that young people are safeguarded from harm.

Staff are aware that one young person smokes in his bedroom. Managers and staff do not challenge this unsafe activity. There are several cigarette burns on the young person's bedroom carpet and the young person is being allowed to have a cigarette lighter on him during the day and at night. Despite staff being aware of the smoking risks, little has been done to reduce the risk of harm.

Managers have failed to respond and report safeguarding incidents to the right professionals and agencies. In December 2018, a young person made an allegation against a member of staff. Managers failed to ensure that safeguarding protocols were implemented. This caused a significant delay in the allegation being reported. In January 2019, the same young person reported to staff two allegations of being physically assaulted by another young person. These allegations were again not referred and/or investigated through the right safeguarding procedures. In addition, Ofsted as the regulator was not notified of these safeguarding events. Timely and effective action has not taken place and child protection procedures have not been followed.

When young people have been missing from care, staff have not ensured that young people are offered a return home interview. This creates a missed opportunity to help young people to talk through the reasons why they have put themselves at risk of harm.

Managers have not ensured that the home's locality risk assessment is kept up to date to help to inform the staff of the risks that young people can face when accessing the local community.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The home has not had a registered manager since January 2018. Since November 2018, three different managers have covered the home. This prolonged period of management instability has left the home without efficient managerial arrangements.

Managers and staff have failed to accurately assess the risks that young people face or devise effective plans to manage these risks. Staff lack the necessary skills, support and supervision to ensure that they safeguard young people in their care. Systems to monitor and review the quality of care are not in place. As a result of significant failures found at the home, Ofsted has issued a notice to restrict the admission of new young people and issued three compliance notices.

Managers have failed to ensure that young people experience continuity of care. There has been a period of insufficient staffing, with high staff turnover. This has led to a reliance on agency staff to cover shifts.

Staff team meetings do not happen on a regular basis. This leaves staff without group support and the opportunity to share practice.

Managers have failed to ensure that new staff receive a full induction and that all staff receive training that enables them to meet the young people's complex needs. For example, staff have not received training in understanding the risk of county lines, the dangers of substance misuse, risk assessment work and understanding the effects of bullying.

The lack of management oversight has meant that managers are not able to provide a full and accurate record of incidents that occur in the home. Paperwork is incomplete, unavailable or missing.

## **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:** 1241407

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Evergreen Children's Home Limited

**Registered provider address:** Fairgate House, 205 Kings Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2AA

**Responsible individual:**

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Debbie Holder, 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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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