

# SC368032

Registered provider: Constant Child Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children and young people aged between seven and 17 years old, irrespective of gender, who have social and emotional difficulties. There is a suitably qualified manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since November 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 1 to 2 May 2019

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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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	inadequate
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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:** 23 October 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/08/2018	Full	Inadequate
21/08/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/02/2017	Interim	Declined in 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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(c))	14/06/2019
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children.  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. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(2)(c)(i))	14/06/2019
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.  In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care; (Regulation 7 (1)(c)(2)(a)(iii)(iv)).	14/06/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	14/06/2019

<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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</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 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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(h))</p>	14/06/2019
<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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))</p>	14/06/2019
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children’s home a statement (“the statement of purpose”) which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1)(3)(a)(b))</p>	14/06/2019
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(d))</p>	14/06/2019
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an</p>	14/06/2019

<p>allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular, provide for liaison and co-operation with any local authority which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home. (Regulation 34 (1)(b)(2)(a))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	<p>14/06/2019</p>

## 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)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home’s arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home’s care. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 65, paragraph 15.5)

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff do not manage children's and young people's transitions into and on from the home consistently well. Although one child experienced a planned and positive move on from the home, two young people did not. Managers do not always match new children and young people well to those already residing in the home. This leads to instability and, at times, the home has been unsettled. In addition, inspectors observed staff not doing all they could to reassure a new young person and help him to feel welcomed. This compromises children's and young people's experiences.

Children's and young people's progress is mixed. For example, one child has returned to live with his family and made good progress in different aspects of his development. Another child has made some progress over time. However, this has not been maintained and there are limitations on what further progress the child can make without specialist help and support. Two young people have moved on sooner than anticipated. One of them did not make good progress, and another moved on due to specific needs that were not known fully at the point when he came to live at the home.

The home is generally clean and tidy in most areas. However, other areas in the home do not create a nurturing environment, such as children's and young people's bedrooms and the communal bathroom. These rooms are impersonal and bare. This does not help the children and young people to invest in their home and feel valued.

Staff understand some of the children's and young people's vulnerabilities and respond to these well. Staff give children and young people praise and show them appropriate affection when required. Overall, children and young people have developed some positive relationships with some staff.

Children's and young people's educational progress varies significantly. For example, one child was well supported and made good progress with his learning. However, another child's progress at school has deteriorated. Although staff support him to engage in constructive activity during the day when he is not in school, there has not been a coordinated and timely review of the child's educational needs. As a result, he remains in a school that cannot meet his needs. This is affecting his learning and his emotional well-being. The registered manager recognises that this is unacceptable and has taken some steps to address this. However, she has not gone far enough to challenge effectively the child's placing authority and local education authority to bring about change.

Managers and staff do not seek feedback from children and young people consistently well. For example, staff have developed forms for children and young people to complete so that they can write down what they think about where they live. However, managers and staff told the inspectors that they do not use these often. When children and young people do express their views or interests, these are not always followed up by staff. For example, one child requested a TV for his bedroom. However, this had not been followed up sufficiently to help the child work towards this. As a result, children and young people do not see that their views are valued or acted on by staff.

Staff support and encourage children and young people to maintain positive relationships with those who are important to them. Staff communicate well with social workers to review the arrangements for children and young people to spend time with their families. Staff show a good understanding of the importance of children and young people spending meaningful time with their birth families and continue to manage this well.

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

Managers and staff do not regularly review risk management strategies used at the home.. As a result, staff practice of locking some internal and external doors has become custom and practice, rather than being based on a specific need to protect children and young people from harm. This places some unnecessary restrictions on children and young people.

Staff receive some good guidance to help them manage some risky behaviours that children and young people present. For example, strategies about how to manage a child's self-harming behaviour are clearly outlined in the child's risk assessment. However, this good practice is not consistent. For example, managers and staff have not carefully considered risks relating to a child's use of an internet-enabled device. As a result, at the time of the inspection the child had access to potentially inappropriate information on this device. The registered manager took prompt action to address this during the inspection.

Staff manage some aspects of challenging behaviour well. They effectively de-escalate situations, which means that the number of incidents involving physical intervention is reducing. However, restraint records do not contain all the required information. Furthermore, managers do not identify these shortfalls. As a result, this is a missed opportunity to ensure that restraint practice is safe.

Children and young people do not go missing from the home. However, there is guidance for staff to follow should this happen. As a result, staff are prepared and know what to do should such an incident occur.

The registered manager has appropriately shared information with Ofsted, and with the local authority designated officer, about safeguarding incidents. However, the responsible individual has not followed the risk management plan in place. This undermines the measures that have been put in place to safeguard children and has the potential to place children and young people at risk of harm.

Staff do some good work with children and young people about helping them to understand their behaviour, learn different coping strategies and how to keep themselves safe. However, this is not consistently applied. For example, staff do not complete follow-up work with children and young people around racism and knife crime.

Staff use praise and reward to encourage children and young people to display positive behaviour. However, when they use sanctions these are not always proportionate. For

example, the amount of financial reparation one child is expected to pay is not realistic and therefore lacks effectiveness.

Children told the inspector that they feel safe and could identify a trusted adult. This means that children do have someone they can talk to if they have any worries.

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

Recruitment practice is not always robust. For example, managers do not always verify references before new staff start work at the home and they do not always account for gaps in applicants' employment histories. This does not fully protect children and young people from potentially unsuitable people working at the home.

The registered manager and responsible individual do not have a good understanding about the strengths and weaknesses of the home. This limits the capacity of the home to improve.

External monitoring is weak. For example, the independent visitor has not identified shortfalls in the quality of care provided to children and young people. This does not help to bring about change. Furthermore, the visitor does not make it clear whether he gives children and young people the opportunity to talk to him in private about their views of the home.

Staff use practices that give the home an institutional feel. This shortfall was identified at the last inspection and has not been addressed. For example, some staff continue to wear white coats when preparing food. The registered provider fails to comprehend how this daily activity could be managed differently, which does not help to bring about improvement.

Staff told the inspectors that they feel supported by the registered manager and have a positive relationship with her. However, the quality of supervision that staff receive is variable. Although some staff receive regular supervision, others do not. Furthermore, the registered manager does not always use supervision effectively to monitor staff progress and professional development. This does not promote staff development and improve practices within the home. The lack of oversight means opportunities for raising staff aspirations and ensuring better care for children and young people are missed.

The registered manager has failed to ensure that staff who work in the home have satisfactory qualifications to meet the needs of children and young people who live there. Five out of nine staff members have not qualified to level 3 in caring for children within the required timescale. Furthermore, the registered manager does not have a system in place to monitor staff training effectively. As a result, it is not clear what training staff have undertaken and what they still need to complete.

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated to accurately reflect changes to the staff team and service delivery. In addition, the registered manager does not understand the therapeutic support, which is outlined in the home's statement of



purpose. This undermines the registered manager's ability to deliver care that is in consistent with the aims and objectives set out in this document.

Partner agencies have mixed views about the service. Some professionals are pleased with the care provided to children and young people. However, others recognise that the staff are not helping children and young people effectively to continue to make progress and achieve their full potential.

## 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:** SC368032

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

**Registered provider:** Constant Child Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Beecham Business Centre, Beecham Business Park, Northgate, Aldridge, West Midlands WS9 8TZ

**Responsible individual:** Barry Edwards

**Registered manager:** Jenevieve Smith

## **Inspectors**

Patrick McIntosh, social care inspector

Jackie Line, regulatory inspection manager

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