

SC487702

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children who have difficulty in managing their emotions and behaviour.

The registered manager left in December 2017. Since then, two managers have been appointed, but left before they were registered. A new manager has been in post since 28 January 2019. He has applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 June 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: 31 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/10/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;</p> <p>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; and</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>In particular, this relates to issues such as chasing local authorities for children's review minutes and for return home interviews to take place, and working with parents.</p>	31/07/2019
<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>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>	31/12/2019

<p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, develop a well-qualified staff team.</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>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>	<p>31/07/2019</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</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 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, assess risks identified in recruitment checks and, in relation to an individual who worked in a previous role with children or vulnerable adults, verify, as far as is practicable, the reasons why the employment ended.</p>	<p>31/07/2019</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p>	<p>31/07/2019</p>

<p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child —</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>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))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that notifications contain all of the required information.</p>	
<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). (Regulation 46 (1))</p> <p>In particular, assess the risks associated with anti-social behaviour, gangs and drugs misuse in the area.</p>	31/07/2019

Recommendations

- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn, emphasising the value of independent study and reading for enjoyment. The home must make available suitable facilities, equipment and resources for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Inspection judgements

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

Some children have good experiences and make progress. However, a child who left the

home recently had to move because there were concerns for his safety due to drugs misuse and gang involvement. During his time at the home, he was involved in the criminal justice system because of events in the community and his behaviour at the home.

The staff keep photos and memory books for children to have when they leave the home. This gives them a tangible reminder of their time living at the home, their achievements while there and the times that they have enjoyed with staff. However, the child who recently moved on did not have his book given or sent to him. His experience of leaving the home was sudden and unplanned. A positive mark of the end of the placement could have helped him to move on.

There are very few books or other reading materials in the communal areas of the home. This limits the opportunities for staff to promote informal education for the children.

A child who recently moved to the home has had a good introduction and she is beginning to form good relationships with the staff. Another child, who has been at the home for some time, has good relationships with the staff and has made progress in her education and health. The parent of the child who recently moved in an emergency has thanked the home for the work they did with him.

The children are given sensory boxes containing items that they can find comforting, and that help them to manage their emotions. The good relationships that the staff build with the children help to support children emotionally.

The staff help the children to learn independence skills through formal and informal sessions on subjects such as cooking, budgeting and keeping safe. Staff help children to find volunteering or part-time jobs and college courses. This all helps to prepare the children for their futures.

The staff support the children to see their families. For one child, this has led to her enjoying seeing her family much more than she used to. She is described in her records as 'smiling from ear to ear' when she goes to see her family.

The staff keep separate files for the children that include child-friendly versions of important documents, key-work sessions, goals, development plans and certificates to recognise achievements. These files help the children to be involved in their plans and goals.

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

Managers have reviewed the risk assessment for the home's location. The assessment includes the risks of antisocial behaviour and gang involvement near the home. In respect of children going missing, managers have recorded that they will need to be

aware of the risks to children when making placement decisions. Managers have not recorded this measure in respect of antisocial behaviour and gang involvement. Recently, a child who had moved into the home was subject to these risks, and had his placement ended suddenly because of his continued involvement in risk-taking behaviour.

There has been a high number of incidents of children going missing from the home, with 83 occurring since the last full inspection in August 2018. Only nine return home interviews have taken place. This is an exceptionally low number. Failure to provide children with return home interviews limits the opportunities for the children to speak about their reasons for going missing. The managers are in the process of having meetings and discussions to try to make sure that placing authorities undertake these important interviews, but they are still not happening consistently.

Managers carry out recruitment checks on new staff and seek assurance from agencies that they have performed the required checks on their staff who work at the home. Managers had begun, but failed to complete a risk assessment in respect of some concerns that were identified as part of the recruitment process for one member of staff. The managers failed to assess the potential risk and consider the need for any control measures. This is a significant gap in making sure that staff are suitable to work with vulnerable children. In a separate case, managers failed to verify a member of staff's reasons for leaving a previous job that involved working with children.

Some of the children become safer during their time at the home. They decrease their levels of risk-taking in areas such as self-harm and how they behave in cars.

The relationship that the managers have with the designated officer has improved over the last year. The designated officer said that managers respond appropriately to safeguarding matters and refer them on effectively. This helps to protect children.

There have been a high number of police call-outs to the home because of children's behaviour. However, things are much calmer following one child moving on from the home and a joint meeting between the police and staff at the home. The manager and staff are working with the placing authority and the parent of a child who has recently moved into the home to help implement appropriate boundaries. This will help to keep the child safer and help her to learn to manage her own behaviour better.

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

There has not been a registered manager at the home since December 2017. Since that time, there have been two managers appointed who both left before becoming registered. This has led to a disrupted period for the children and staff. A new manager is in post and the staff and others are positive about the change that he is bringing. His registration is in progress.

Managers understand the areas in which the home should be developed. In several

cases, when a requirement or recommendation has been made, the managers have begun to address the issues, but they have not yet been fully resolved.

Five staff members have left the home since the last full inspection in August 2018. These staff members have been replaced now. The use of agency staff has reduced, as they are only covering sickness leave. Although the home is fully staffed, the level of qualified staff is low. Apart from the responsible individual and the manager, only the deputy manager and the home's social worker are qualified. Consequently, the children are being looked after by a mostly unqualified staff team.

The manager and his predecessors have sent in notifications to Ofsted, but they have not always contained full and detailed information about the incidents. This prevents Ofsted, as the regulator, from having appropriate information about the home between inspections.

The managers have developed some positive relationships with other significant people who are involved in the children's lives. However, there are some cases in which the relationships are not working as well as they could. One child's placing authority has not provided details of her looked after child review for seven months. Another review has taken place without the home or the child receiving the records of what was agreed at the previous review. The manager has only contacted the placing authority about this once. In addition, one child's parent does not receive regular updates as has been agreed. This prevents effective working relationships from generating the best joint care for children.

Managers undertake assessments of children who are likely to move into the home, to see if they can meet their needs and the needs of children already living at the home. The assessment for a child who moved into the home in January 2019 identified significant issues such as violence, drugs misuse and interest in gangs. Managers identified measures to reduce the risks, but they were not realistic and the child continued his involvement in these areas. He was eventually moved for his safety. While he was at the home, the levels of disruption had a negative impact on another child at the home.

Children are involved in decorating and personalising their bedrooms. Their views are listened to. One child wanted to move back to his home area. The manager advocated for the child, with the placing authority, so that this could happen.

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: SC487702

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited

Registered provider address: Orchard House, 1 Old Convent Orchard, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3PQ

Responsible individual: Miguel Valerio

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Clive Lucas: social care inspector

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