

1272209

Registered provider: Discovered Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This five-bedded home was registered in April 2018. It provides care for children who have experienced traumatic childhoods and require support in a nurturing, structured and therapeutic environment. The new manager is suitably qualified and is due to commence the registration process.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 July 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/12/2018	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 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 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>	01/09/2019
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(2)(b)(ii))</p>	01/09/2019

Recommendations

- The home should play a full part in promoting the best interests of the child, proactively advocating for the child to ensure that others play their role and deliver the high-quality support that is needed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.4)
In particular, evidence when the staff make these challenges.

- The Statement of Purpose is of particular importance to this Standard (regulation 6(2)(a) and (b)(i)). Homes are required to develop and keep under review a "Statement of Purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule 1). The information set out in the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5 and 3.6)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
In particular, the monthly reports should be forwarded to Ofsted in a timely way.
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
In particular, ensure that the recruitment process identifies any errors and/or anomalies in employment histories.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
In particular, ensure that records are completed fully with attention to detail and accuracy.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is feeling more settled now, having had a change of manager and numerous staff changes. Despite these changes, the children are making good progress, particularly in relation to their social and emotional well-being.

They are supported, as needed, to access specialist clinical services. This is via the in-house team of clinicians or through referrals to the child and adolescent mental health service. This input is assisting the children in addressing their past trauma. Engagement with the therapists, one of which is based in the home, and the use of a therapeutic dog are assisting children in managing their emotions and frustrations.

At the time of the last inspection, there was a lack of consistency regarding boundaries and expectations. The new manager arranged for the children to attend a staff meeting where together they established some house rules. These included the introduction of set times for internet use. All agreed that the internet should be unavailable during school hours. This positive approach and the establishing of boundaries have assisted in establishing positive routines for the children.

The children have bespoke educational programmes. They have built a good rapport with their tutors and are now engaging more. One child's timetable has been adjusted because he travels a great distance to school. The new schedule has increased his attendance and has enabled him to maintain his school place.

Family visits to and from the children are encouraged and supported, irrespective of the distance from the home. This is enabling children to build and develop familial relationships that they have either not had previously or not experienced for some time.

Children are supported to ensure that they have a smooth transition into and out of the home. This includes the manager visiting children prior to them moving in. These visits enable the manager to better assess whether children will be compatible with those already living in the home. A child, who moved in recently, spoke about how welcome he has been made to feel. Having never been to a residential provision before, he was pleased that it feels more like a family home than he had expected.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Clearer boundaries are now in place and children's behaviours are improving. The number of significant events has decreased. Children are no longer going missing. When this was occurring, staff followed the protocols, worked closely with other professionals and made proactive attempts to ensure that the children were safe.

The significant events that have occurred relate to one child's self-injurious behaviour. These incidents have been managed well. The child is being appropriately supported until a more specialist placement can be found.

Children's behaviour support plans and risk assessments have not been updated and reviewed appropriately. This prevents staff from being confident that they are working with an awareness of known and current risks. Fortunately, as much of the behaviour has improved and/or risks remain unchanged, this has had little impact.

The computer system has been updated further to ensure that the children's internet usage can be tracked. It now details individual children's online activity. This, along with the more limited access, assists in keeping children safe when online at home. The house is showing several signs of damage. This is being addressed as part of a programme of works. Several aspects of the house are in the process of being refurbished and the office is being relocated.

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

The new manager has been in post for a month. He holds the required qualifications. He is familiar to the home and the staff, as he was previously employed as the deputy manager. The staff speak positively about him, describing him as supportive, fair and approachable.

The high turnover of staff has led to several aspects of the recording and other systems not being fully completed. Coupled with the change in management, this has led to less managerial oversight and monitoring of general recording, learning from incidents, updating placement plans and reviewing risk assessments. This is in addition to a lapse in the updating and reviewing of documents such as the statement of purpose. The failure to update these documents prevents the children, families or professionals having current and/or correct information.

There is a lack of evidence that the manager/team have chased missing documents, such as statutory review minutes, or education, health and care plans. This hinders the home's ability to know that they are working with the children on current targets.

Staff recruitment files have some omissions, which basic auditing would highlight. This is also the case with the incomplete admission and discharge book and the out-of-date development plan that predates the home opening.

The independent visitor is carrying out monthly visits, but the reports are not being sent on to Ofsted each month. This prevents Ofsted, as the regulator, from having a clear overview of events in the home.

Shortfalls raised at the last inspection have all been met. However, new shortfalls have been identified. The manager is aware of this and acknowledges that these have occurred as he has been focused on building the staff team and observing and developing practice. He is seeking to recruit a deputy manager, as this support will enable him to focus on the managerial tasks.

Feedback from professionals and family is mixed. Some describe communication as good while others feel that they find things out by chance, or later than they should. A social worker questioned the quality of some of the reports she receives, stating that sometimes it is unclear who is being referred to, for example the child or a member of staff. Another social worker felt that the historic lack of boundaries meant that the positive progress being seen now should have occurred sooner.

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: 1272209

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Discovered Limited

Registered provider address: 4-4a Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1HD

Responsible individual: Thomas Mayer

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector:

Sonia Hay, social care inspector

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