

1271607

Registered provider: Options Autism (4) Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for children and young people who have a range of complex needs and/or autistic spectrum disorder and associated learning disability. Children and young people are aged between eight and 18 years old.

No registered manager has been in post since December 2018. A new manager is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 23 October 2019

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 19 June 2019

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained in effectiveness.

This inspection was carried out in order to consider specific concerns received by Ofsted.

The home does not have a registered manager. The manager who was in post at the last full inspection has left. A new experienced manager has started and is in the process of registering with Ofsted. She is supported by a deputy manager and plans to recruit a second deputy manager to strengthen and support the management team.

The manager has made good progress in addressing the regulatory breaches identified at the last full inspection. Children and young people's health needs are better met, and health appointments are now clearly documented in children and young people's

records. Children and young people now have individualised and up-to-date risk assessments that support staff to keep children and young people safe. Recruitment processes have been improved and children and young people now have access to all areas of the home.

The manager has an action plan to make further improvements and this is reviewed regularly by the management team.

Since the last full inspection, no children or young people have moved into the home. One young person has moved out. This was not done in a planned way. The manager made the decision to serve immediate notice due to the increasing risks to the young person, others living in the home and staff. Prior to the young person moving into the home, a thorough matching process took place. However, not all information had been shared with the home.

Children and young people enjoy a range of positive experiences. Staff take them to individualised activities including football, ice skating, shopping and theme parks. The home environment is pleasant. The outside grounds have animals for children and young people to enjoy.

The manager and staff know and understand children and young people's needs. Staff consult with children and young people regularly, capturing the information in a 'my weekly views' book. In addition, staff carry out key-work sessions to discuss topics relevant to the child or young person's needs.

Overall, staff use restraint appropriately and only as a last resort to keep everyone involved safe. However, the manager's written review and monitoring of each individual physical intervention needs to be better recorded. This will help support reflective practice and help the manager to identify any patterns or trends.

On one occasion, an investigation was required following an allegation of an unapproved restraint. The manager did investigate the incident and followed safeguarding procedures. However, despite this being required by the home's policies, there was no investigation report detailing the actions taken or why. Furthermore, a clear conclusion to the investigation identifying lessons learned is not available.

In some areas, management oversight and monitoring has improved. For example, the manager now identifies and addresses poor staff practice. This ensures that staff develop their skills. Staff skills have improved since the last inspection. However, the staff team is still evolving with further progress needed to have a skilled and established team. On occasions, the manager is having to address basic poor practice that should not be happening, for example staff's poor responses to young people. Managers are focused on recruiting skilled and qualified staff.

A new independent person has been employed to provide external monitoring of the home. Monthly reporting has improved. However, the independent visitor needs to document within the report whether children and young people are safeguarded and if their well-being is being promoted.

The manager works in partnership with other professionals and shares information to ensure that children and young people's needs are met. A social worker told the

inspector, 'The home is doing a wonderful job and provides excellent reports.'

The manager has made positive changes in a short period of time. She has plans to continue to develop the service and is aware of the home's strengths and areas for development.

New staff have been recruited, including a deputy manager, and regular staff supervision is taking place. Staff are positive about the changes that have been made. They told the inspector that they had seen an increase in staffing levels, more 'visible' managers and that they now receive positive and supportive supervisions.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/12/2018	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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(vii))	25/11/2019
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to 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)(c)(h))	25/11/2019

<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44(4)(a)(b))</p>	<p>25/11/2019</p>
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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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1271607

Registered provider: Options Autism (4) Ltd

Registered provider address: Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester,
Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Mark Williams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, social care inspector

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