

# 1229766

Registered provider: Aurora Care and Education Opco Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home. Most of the placements are for up to 52 weeks and are long term. The home also provides some short breaks. The organisation has a school, and accommodation for adults who have learning disabilities and complex needs, in the grounds. The home is registered to provide care for up to 29 children who have complex support and health needs. These needs include profound learning difficulties and/or sensory and/or physical impairments.

The manager has been registered since 5 December 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 19 to 20 November 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	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:** 11 December 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Good
23/05/2017	Full	Good
26/09/2016	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— 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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, adhere to the home's safeguarding policy and procedure.</p>	16/12/2019
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the</p>	31/01/2020

<p>registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))</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—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>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)(h))</p>	31/01/2020
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.</p> <p>(Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))</p>	31/01/2020
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</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>	16/12/2019

<p>is instigated; or 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)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p> <p>A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.</p> <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.</p> <p>The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p>	<p>16/12/2019</p>

## Recommendations

- Staff must be aware of whether a child has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and the information in it. An EHC plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has special educational needs or a disability. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)

## Inspection judgements

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

Despite some positive outcomes for children, this inspection identified a number of shortfalls in the care provided. Two shortfalls that were identified at the last inspection have not been addressed. Shortfalls in the help and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home mean that, overall, the home requires improvement to be good.

There have been a number of medication errors including a child being administered medication incorrectly and one child receiving another child's medication. For children who are reliant on medication, these errors are potentially detrimental to the children's health.

Managers have not requested children's education, health and care plans with enough regularity. This can delay children being provided with the resources and services that they need.

The children benefit from an accessible and well-appointed home. The home is well resourced with specialist equipment to meet the complex needs of the children. Staff support the children to access the hydro pool, multi-sensory room and specialist play equipment in the grounds. The children's bedrooms are highly personalised and reflect the likes and dislikes of the children to whom they belong. Communal areas are attractively decorated and used well by the children. However, some of the fridges have not been checked for cleanliness.

Staff can clearly identify children's progress. Staff recognise improvements in children's mobility, social skills and life skills. Some improvements are impressive given the children's starting points. The children have individual books that clearly show the staff how to support their needs. The behavioural and communication needs of the children are quite varied and the information provided in these books enables the staff to adopt a consistent approach. Achievement files detail a good range of pictorial evidence to show individual developments and children's engagement with the staff. The staff provide children with memory books as a physical record of their time spent at the home.

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

The managers have failed to manage child protection concerns and safeguarding allegations in line with the organisation's safeguarding policy. Management oversight of

and response to one child protection concern, that took place outside the home was poor. The managers failed to make a timely and safe assessment of the child's exposure to potential risk. Managers and the wider staff team are not always clear on what should be done, when and by whom. This has led to delays in children getting the help that they need in an appropriate time frame. Failure to follow safeguarding policies and act swiftly in response to safeguarding concerns potentially puts vulnerable children at increased risk of harm.

The staff are confident in raising concerns about children's welfare. The managers have responded to some concerns about practice and made some improvements. However, there are no records of action taken and no clear account to demonstrate that each concern has been addressed. This fails to safeguard children effectively.

Managers have not routinely informed Ofsted of notifiable events including allegations and safeguarding concerns. Although a practice concern about a staff member was identified and appropriate action taken, this was not notified to Ofsted. Failure to notify Ofsted of significant events prevents Ofsted from having a current view of the home and the action taken to safeguard children.

Staff use restraint proportionately and only when necessary. Staff use a range of de-escalation skills, which have led to reductions in the use of restraint for some children. However, the staff do not provide the children with a debrief after restraint. Although children's cognitive levels may prevent a verbal debrief following an incident, the manager has not explored other avenues to gain an understanding of the children's views and feelings about the incident.

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

The registered manager is experienced. She is qualified to level 4 and working towards a relevant level 5 qualification. She manages a large team of staff that works in the seven residential flats. The sheer size of the service and the numbers of children make the managerial oversight difficult.

There have been 23 new staff since the last inspection. Consequently, there are always staff who are part-way through their induction or probationary periods. These staff lack the experience and skills to competently manage the children's healthcare needs. The manager has devised safer working practices for inexperienced and agency staff. These measures mean that there are some staff who cannot support certain children.

There are, on occasion, up to seven agency staff on each shift of 18 staff in total. The agency staff are used to fill the high number of staff vacancies, in addition to bank staff and the use of overtime. Although these are regular agency staff, permanent staff have identified elements of poor practice linked to the agency staff. This does not provide the children with consistently good-quality care.

The staff do not have regular supervision. There are three staff who have had only three

supervisions in seven months. The lack of supervision was identified at the last inspection and has not been addressed. There are also staff who, despite poor practice, have not had regular supervision meetings.

The managerial monitoring systems are not working well. The staff continue to make errors in the administration of medication. The manager has devised a tracker to monitor these errors. However, this system has not captured all of these. The tracker is therefore not accurate, and the manager has failed to investigate and analyse the data.

The managerial monitoring and oversight of child protection concerns is poor.

The external monitoring visits have recently increased in scope and in length, at the request of the senior managers. These have raised pertinent questions and prompted the manager in the management of some incidents. In the last year, since the last inspection, most external visits were short and provided a small sample of the records. This was a previous shortfall and has been raised again.

There has been an overall decline in the quality of care provided. There are repeated shortfalls and a number of areas in leadership and management that require improvement. The senior leadership team is aware of these and has deployed a care improvement manager to assist the manager to address these areas and improve the service.

## **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:** 1229766

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

**Registered provider:** Aurora Care and Education Opco Limited

**Registered provider address:** The Aurora Group, 33 Holborn, London EC1N 2HT

**Responsible individual:** Philip Jonas

**Registered manager:** Alison Brushett

## Inspectors

Lianne Bradford, social care inspector  
Deirdra Keating, social care inspector

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