

1234317

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately-owned home provides medium- to long-term therapeutic care and accommodation for up to six children or young people who may have suffered childhood complex trauma. This trauma can be the culmination of physical, emotional, neglect, sexual and complex trauma, which may have associated risks, such as child sexual exploitation. The home offers planned placements for boys and girls aged between eight and 13 years of age.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since 7 January 2020. The responsible individual is due to leave on 17 February 2020.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious child protection allegations were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered (where appropriate) alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious failures that mean children's welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 3 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/05/2018	Full	Good
24/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/10/2017	Full	Good
29/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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, the 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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the 	22/03/2020

<p>competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;</p> <p>are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;</p> <p>de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;</p> <p>understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and</p> <p>have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)(xii)(xiii)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that recordings are made of any direct work or recommendations following any incidents of bullying.</p>	
<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;</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>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</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.</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(b))</p>	<p>22/03/2020</p>

<p>In particular, ensure that staff are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies and understand their role and responsibility in relation to keeping children safe.</p> <p>Ensure that staff are equipped to recognise and take effective action to reduce the risk of any harm to the child or young person.</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>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the 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 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. (Regulation 13 (2)(a)(c)(d))</p>	22/03/2020
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	22/03/2020
<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. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p>	22/03/2020
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p>	22/03/2020

<p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that records are complete to give a good understanding of the lives and experiences of the children in the home. That all records are signed and dated by the author.</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that rotas provide the details of staff working the different shifts and are legible.</p>	22/03/2020
<p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that complaints are fully investigated and clearly record the action taken to address and resolve the complaint.</p>	22/03/2020
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. (Regulation 45 (1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that a review is completed every six months and submitted to Ofsted.</p>	22/03/2020

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Evidenced gathered on inspection demonstrated that children's needs were not being met. This is because children were not being provided with an environment that kept them safe. Staff are not fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting young people. As a result, this does not protect young people from harm.

Progress for children in education has been varied. Prior to the on-site school closing, some children were educated in the home. The home worked closely with educational staff to secure off-site provisions for all of the children, although for some children there was a delay in commencing. This has had an impact on their individual learning and development.

Children are not consistently supported to maintain positive relationships with their peers and kept safe from incidents of bullying. Direct work sessions are not consistently completed with children following the incidents, and not all recommendations have been followed up, such as completing mediation as identified. This has had an impact on children's happiness and, for some children, this has raised their levels of anxiety.

Children have not consistently been supported with routines and clear boundaries due to the high turnover of staff and, on occasions, insufficient staff to support the children's individual needs. As a result, there had been an increase in physical intervention and sometimes police being used to support staff with managing behaviours. This has had a negative impact on the experience and progress for some children at the home.

Children's health records identify where routine health appointments have been scheduled. However, it is not clear for some children if they have attended these appointments. All children are registered with health services to support their physical health needs.

Family time is encouraged where appropriate and supported for children to maintain relationships with their families. This helps children to retain a sense of identity and promotes attachments.

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

The management of allegations failed to keep children and staff safe. Leaders and managers have not ensured that their safeguarding policies are followed. The lack of a risk management plan, and failure to implement the agreed safeguarding practice arrangements following allegations against staff, has placed children and staff at risk.

Children's risks are identified in their risk management plans, and staff are not trained to manage some of the children's presenting risks, for example managing self-harming behaviours, including the use of ligatures. The lack of specific training means that staff are not equipped to keep children safe.

A small number of incidents of bullying have been recognised, recorded and addressed. However, this is not common practice. There have been a number of reports from

children, and a placing social worker, saying that children feel unsafe as a result of the actions of their peers. There is little evidence in children's records to identify how the manager and leadership team have addressed this to ensure that children are kept safe and promote the children's sense of safety.

Complaints made by, and on behalf of, children are not consistently investigated. Although children and social workers have raised their concerns about feeling unsafe as a result of another child's behaviour towards them, there is little evidence of what actions have been taken to manage and address this.

The home environment was not safe on the day of the inspection. Windows were broken in the games room and, in one child's bedroom, the fuse and electrical box was not secure and had wires that were accessible. There were also broken light switches and a broken fire call point. This was raised, and the provider did respond swiftly to ensure that these issues were all addressed and made safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Children live in a home that is poorly managed. Poor leadership and management have resulted in inconsistencies and ineffective communication between staff. This has led to the serious failings found during this inspection.

The inspectors found that staff are unclear about the ethos and philosophy of the home as described in the statement of purpose. Staff do not have sufficient skills, experience and qualifications to create a safe therapeutic environment.

Children's experiences, progress and safety have been compromised as they experience inconsistent care from a fluctuating staff team. Rotas are not easy to follow, and there has been a high staff turnover. This means that there are a number of vacant posts.

Staff, including the previous registered manager, have not received supervision in line with the provider's policy. When staff have been supervised, the level of support has been variable as they have been supervised by different leaders. When supervision has taken place, this also varies in quality. Some sessions provide staff with the time and space to reflect on children's behaviour and individual development opportunities. However, other records are limited in content and do not demonstrate how managers support and manage staff to ensure that children receive a good standard of safe care.

The management team has failed to ensure that it uses the monitoring and review systems, such as their own independent audits or the last six-monthly quality of care review, to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided at the home. Consequently, areas for improvement have not been addressed and decisive action has not been taken to resolve issues.

Feedback forms for a number of professionals in May and June 2019 identified positive feedback about the registered manager, the standard of the home and the quality of care afforded to children. More recently, this view has changed. Placing local authorities spoken to raised concerns with regard to the safeguarding practices within the home.

The concerns were so great that local authorities have ended children's placements prematurely in order to keep them safe.

Children's records are incomplete, not easy to find or follow, and are not consistently signed and dated by the author. This prevents the reader from gaining a good understanding of the lives and experiences of children in the home.

The provider has failed to address one of the recommendations raised at the last inspection. As such, children's freedom and access in their home continues to be restricted. This is because the games room and kitchen are locked during periods of the day and night.

The provider has addressed the one requirement raised at the last inspection. The independent visitor now offers an opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded, and whether the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

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: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Bethan Davies

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sue Hatton, social care inspector

Janine Shortman-Thomas, social care compliance inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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