

# 1183621

Registered provider: A & T Home Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This home is run by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to four children. The provider's overall aim is to support children and their families to reunite.

There has been no registered manager at this home since November 2019. The acting manager has been in post since October 2019 and has submitted an application to Ofsted.

**Inspection date: 5 March 2020**

**Date of last inspection:** 2 April 2019

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**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 the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The provider has met some of the three requirements and five recommendations that were raised at the last inspection, but the majority have not been met. In addition, further requirements have been raised at this inspection.

The last inspection highlighted concerns about the lack of continuity of management due to changes of managers and about the home having been without a registered manager for over 38 weeks. Shortly after the full inspection in April 2019, a manager was registered, but this manager left in October 2019. The newly appointed deputy manager, who had no experience of working at a children's home, almost immediately took up post as acting manager. Since the last inspection, there have been three separate nominated responsible individuals. The concerns about inconsistent and ineffective management have therefore increased since the last inspection. The lack of consistent and effective oversight of the home has had a negative effect. The home is not delivering the quality of care outlined in its statement of purpose.

The children's experiences vary. One child is making some positive progress and is re-engaging in education. However, some other children's placements have ended as the home was not able to meet their needs. Although there appears to be some recent improvement under the new acting manager, the provider has not always communicated well with other professionals.

The new manager and staff are individually caring towards the children and are beginning to develop positive relationships with them. However, the staff team has undergone many changes and only two members of staff have been employed for more than eight months. The lack of continuity has affected the ability of some children to build relationships with the staff as they do not have confidence that the staff will stay.

Staffing arrangements have not always met the children's needs. On one occasion, a child was left at the home with a single staff member. This staff member did not have the training and skills to meet the child's healthcare needs. The child told their social worker that they did not feel safe. There are no documented risk assessments in respect of lone working arrangements, and the child's placing authority had not agreed to any such arrangements.

Due to the changes of staffing and the team's lack of experience, the staff do not instil consistently effective boundaries. The children have complex emotional and behavioural needs and require consistent and intensive staff support.

Newly admitted children do not have an individualised risk assessment and risk management plan. The children do not have clear missing-from-home risk assessments. There are no suitably detailed protocols to support the staff in responding to missing-from-home incidents. There is a lack of consistently clear information and guidance for staff on managing risk.

When children go missing, the records of staff actions are not always clear. Sometimes, the records of a child going missing cannot be located or are not held. For example, on occasion, two children have gone missing together, yet the records of the events were only recorded on one child's file. The manager and staff do not now know when incidents have occurred. There is no evidence of robust monitoring to ensure that the staff's responses have been appropriate and that the push-and-pull factors that may influence the children have been explored. Therefore, records fail to demonstrate that the children are safeguarded effectively.

Records are not consistently clearly and appropriately maintained to give useful insight into the care and support provided to children or to help the children understand their histories. There is no clear and shared approach to the maintenance of electronic and paper records. The manager has not audited the records to ensure that they contain suitable information. This means that the manager's ability to take prompt, effective action and to understand any impact on children's well-being is compromised.

Other mandatory records are poorly maintained. The records of children admitted to, and discharged from, the home do not contain all the required information. Staff rotas are not an accurate record of when staff have been working at the home. The lack of effective systems for recording complaints means that the home is not able to produce a clear and reliable summary record of any complaints received by the home since the last inspection. This is particularly relevant given the changes to management and staff. The recording of individual complaints is inconsistent and there are no records available of a child's recent complaint. As a result, it is difficult to know what action has been taken.

The building presents hazards to the children and staff. A wall to the rear of the property has been knocked down. Loose bricks, nails and a metal reinforcing bar are accessible to the children. The bathroom light cable is broken. The children have to stand on the bath to switch the light on and off. The home has sustained damage that has not been well repaired, and areas of the home require redecoration. Consequently, the home does not provide a cosy and inviting environment that promotes a sense of belonging and pride.

The provider has not sent a copy of the current statement of purpose to Ofsted and the copy held at the home is dated December 2018. There have been significant changes at the home since that time. Therefore, the information that is provided to staff, other agencies and Ofsted is significantly out of date.

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
02/04/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/07/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2017	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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii))</p>	01/05/2020
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(v))</p>	01/04/2020
<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>	01/05/2020

<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(1)(2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that there are clear and suitably detailed risk assessments in place for each child that are consistently followed by staff, and that suitable risk assessments are in place when staff work alone at the home with children. Furthermore, ensure that incidents of children going missing and the actions that the staff take to safeguard them when they are missing are clearly recorded.</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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(d))</p>	16/03/2020
<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>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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each</p>	11/05/2020

<p>child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p>	
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, when appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))</p>	30/04/2020
<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; and</p> <p>retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	30/04/2020
<p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.</p> <p>In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.</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.</p> <p>The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI’s request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39(1)(2)(3)(5))</p>	30/04/2020

## Recommendations

- Work in close partnership with all those who play a role in protecting and caring for the child, and particularly the child's statutory social worker. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.3)
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Record information on individual children in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Information about this inspection

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.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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:** 1183621

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

**Registered provider:** A & T Home Limited

**Registered provider address:** Plot 8, Maitland Road, Lion Barn Estate, Needham Market, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 8NZ

**Responsible individual:** Joy Bradley

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Joanna Heller, Social Care Inspector

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