

1247212

Exceptional Care Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that is registered for four children who may present with a range of complex needs and functioning complications, including emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home caters for three children in the main part of the house and one child in the attached apartment.

There is currently no manager for the home.

Inspection date: 3 April 2020

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged declined in effectiveness at the interim inspection on 18 February 2020. Inspectors identified significant concerns in relation to safeguarding practice, leadership and management and the quality of care provided to children. Following this inspection, Ofsted issued an emergency suspension notice. There have been no children living at the home since the emergency suspension notice was issued.

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to monitor the actions that the provider has taken in response to the shortfalls identified at the interim inspection. The monitoring visit was an off-site visit due to Covid-19 restrictions. The provider shared a comprehensive action plan and a number of documents with Ofsted that were reviewed and discussed in detail to enable an informed decision to be made as to whether the suspension of the home should be lifted.

Following the emergency suspension of the home and the failings identified, the interim manager resigned from his post, some of the staff team were dismissed and other members of staff are subject to performance improvement plans. The provider is in the process of recruiting a suitably qualified and experienced manager and staff team. However, Ofsted has not been provided with evidence of the experience,

knowledge and skills or safer recruitment checks for new staff to demonstrate that the new staff team is suitable.

The provider is not able to open the home to its full capacity due to there being six residential care worker and the registered manager posts being vacant. The provider will limit the number of children admitted to the home according to the staffing levels and until a full staff team is in place. The responsible individual plans to manage the home until a suitable manager is in post. However, this may impact on her role as responsible individual for other children's homes in the company.

Several changes to policies and procedures, recording systems, staff training and monitoring and review systems have been made to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are able to manage risks effectively. Changes to policies and procedures and records such as the code of conduct policy, incident reports and risk assessments provide clearer guidance and accountability for staff.

The responsible individual and staff have discussed and reflected on the shortfalls identified at the interim inspection, what went wrong, and the changes to policies and procedures to improve the quality of care and safeguarding practice at the home. Additionally, staff have received clear management direction and support. Team meetings and staff supervision will take place regularly where the managers and staff will discuss roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, reporting and recording, the home's ethos and the statement of purpose. This is currently being tested with staff who are now working at other homes in the company. The responsible individual reports improvement in safeguarding practice and the quality and consistency in care provided by these members of staff.

The provider has commissioned a suitably experienced training co-ordinator to implement and facilitate a robust training programme. This includes a comprehensive induction programme for new staff and refresher training for other staff in areas such as safeguarding, restraint, professional boundaries, reporting and recording and key working. Some of the training material was reviewed as part of this monitoring visit and demonstrates a robust training programme to ensure that there is a competent staff team. However, there has been some delay in implementing the training programme due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

The procedures for considering new admissions to the home have been strengthened. All children will have a thorough and detailed compatibility risk assessment that will ensure that the needs of both children already living in the home and those moving in are carefully considered. Furthermore, there will be greater insight into past histories of children and the matching to the staff team. This will ensure that children will only be placed at the home if their needs can be met. The senior staff team will review all admissions to the home.

Improved monitoring systems are aimed at helping the leaders and managers to identify and act to address shortfalls. The provider has implemented more robust management monitoring systems that include monitoring incident reports and risk

assessments to ensure greater scrutiny of the quality of care and conduct provided in the home. Senior managers will complete unannounced visits to the home to monitor practice and audit children's case records. This will ensure that poor practice is identified and managed effectively.

The provider reports that they have made improvement to the environment to ensure that it is safe, warm, comfortable and well presented. All damage at the home has been repaired and improvement made in the décor. Additionally, fire safety equipment is in place and new furniture has been ordered for children's bedrooms. However, the provider is yet to provide Ofsted with video/photographic evidence of the improvement made to the home environment.

The provider has taken steps to address the shortfalls identified at the interim inspection. However, if the home was to open prior to a sufficient staff team that is suitably experienced, trained and skilled to meet the needs of children in its care being in place the provider could not ensure that children will be safely supported. Furthermore, the provider has not yet provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that they are in a suitable position for the suspension notice to be lifted. Therefore, the suspension of the home will remain in place and will be regularly reviewed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
04/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/05/2019	Full	Inadequate
08/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be 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>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare;</p> <p>help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;</p>	31/03/2020

<p>help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child;</p> <p>regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care.</p> <p>ensure that each child—</p> <p>is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives;</p> <p>has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home; and</p> <p>is given appropriate advocacy support.</p> <p>ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about—</p> <p>what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision;</p> <p>ensure that the views of each relevant person are taken into account, so far as reasonably practicable, before making a decision about the care or welfare of a child.</p> <p>(Regulation 7 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(b)(d)(iii)(e))</p>	
<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 positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those</p>	<p>31/03/2020</p>

<p>expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>strive to gain each child's respect and trust;</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the 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>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(viii)(ix)(x))</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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(i)(ii)(v))</p>	31/03/2020
<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</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	31/03/2020

<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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(a)(f))</p>	
<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>ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</p> <p>that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (a)(b)(i)(f))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where 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>	31/03/2020
<p>Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—</p> <p>injury to any person (including the child);</p> <p>serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or</p> <p>a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.</p> <p>Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the behaviour management policy') which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p>	31/03/2020

<p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ('the user'), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; and</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(3)(a)(b)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which—</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p>	31/03/2020

<p>a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other serious incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4))</p>	
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Information about this inspection

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the home. This has included the effect these have had on staffing arrangements.

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1247212

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Malthouse Business Centre, 48 Southport Road,
Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 1QR

Responsible individual: Susan Rolfe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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