

# 1250287

## **Acorn Children's Home (Branston) Ltd**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care for up to four children who have moved following a breakdown in either their fostering or residential placement or who are required to live away from home.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2019 and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management. He informed inspectors that he intends to leave the organisation and to cancel his registration with Ofsted.

**Inspection date:** 6 May 2020

### **This monitoring visit**

On 6 May 2020, Ofsted carried out a monitoring inspection remotely. The inspection identified serious weaknesses in safeguarding practices. In addition, there has been a failure to appropriately notify Ofsted of incidents that have occurred in the home. Ofsted was not informed until the day of the inspection that the registered manager is leaving the service imminently.

Staff lack the necessary skills to keep children safe despite high levels of supervision being in place. Staff have been unable to prevent children from going missing from the home. Despite high levels of staffing, children have consistently been able to gain access to the internet and social media when this has been identified as a specific risk to children's safety and well-being.

It is not known if staff working in the home have been assessed as safe to do so. Staff have been allowed to work at the home despite allegations being made against them when they worked in the company's other home. The registered manager was unaware how it had been deemed safe for the staff member to work in the home. There was no evidence of a risk assessment.

The registered manager failed to inform Ofsted when a member of staff was reported to the designated officer as a result of an incident of inappropriate conduct. The registered manager informed the inspector that an investigation had been

completed by senior managers. Neither the registered manager, designated officer nor Ofsted have received a copy of the investigation report. Ofsted is unable to effectively monitor safeguarding incidents in the home due to the registered manager's failure to submit the appropriate notifications without delay.

Internal and external monitoring systems to review the quality of care provided to children are poor, lack scrutiny and do not comply with regulations.

Against this background, Ofsted is concerned that should further children move into the home they may be at risk of harm. As a result, Ofsted has issued a notice restricting accommodation in the home.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/08/2019	Full	Inadequate
14/05/2019	Full	Inadequate
17/07/2018	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
<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. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i))</p>	14/06/2020
<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))</p>	14/06/2020
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	14/06/2020
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (Regulation 44 (1))</p>	14/06/2020
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (2)(b)(c))</p>	14/06/2020

## Recommendations

- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of the information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

## Information about this inspection

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that COVID-19 (coronavirus) is currently posing to those we regulate. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of COVID-19 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:** 1250287

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

**Registered provider:** Acorn Children's Home (Branston) Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Claremont House, 223 Branston Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 3BT

**Responsible individual:** Farzana Khan

**Registered manager:** Gerald Gordon

## **Inspectors**

Lisa O'Donovan, social care inspector  
Annemarie Parker, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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