

2548567

Worcestershire Children First

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home was previously owned by the local authority. It was re-registered in October 2019 when the local authority moved to be a holding company. It is registered for up to eight children who have suffered adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours, as well as for children who have a learning disability and/or autism spectrum disorder.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2019 and holds a NVQ level 4 in leadership and management.

Inspection date: 1 May 2020 and 4 May 2020

This monitoring visit

The purpose of this monitoring visit is to investigate a number of concerns that have been reported to Ofsted in recent weeks. Due to the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, Ofsted did not physically visit the home. Instead, the inspectors gathered evidence in several different ways, including by talking to the 'groups manager', the registered manager, members of staff, the police and the children living at the home. The registered manager also provided electronic documents for the inspectors to review.

As a result of this inspection, serious concerns about the quality of care have been identified. As a result, Ofsted has issued three compliance notices under regulation 12, regulation 13 and regulation 14.

Children's moves into the home are poorly managed. For example, staff have not had access to basic information such as a child's full name and information about their vulnerabilities. Consequently, when a new child went missing from the home shortly after moving in, the staff could not give the police basic information about the child. Furthermore, staff do not always ensure that they request medical

information before children move into the home. This failure to access key information places children at risk of harm.

Children are not consulted about key decisions. This lack of consultation leaves children feeling vulnerable, scared and uncared for.

Children's complaints go unaddressed and are not shared with other professionals. As a result, children do not feel listened to or respected.

Children do not get the help they need to understand decisions or to manage their emotions. This lack of help has allowed incidents to escalate, and children have become so frightened that they have barricaded themselves in their bedrooms, and the staff have locked themselves in the office.

Children are cared for by staff who are not themselves, supported and guided. This lack of help has resulted in a failure of staff to follow basic safeguarding practice. Consequently, allegations are not promptly reported, and children's concerns go unheard.

Children's care is not monitored effectively by managers. This means that poor practice goes unchallenged. For example, inspectors identified case records that identified poor staff practice that has gone unchallenged by the registered manager.

Staff do not demonstrate professional curiosity. For example, on one occasion, a child went to his bedroom as directed by staff when in a heightened state. Staff then heard a loud crash. Despite the child being on a two-to-one staff ratio, no member of staff went to check on the child. Only after another child alerted the staff that the child had left the home did the staff decide to investigate. Staff found that the child had broken a window and had left the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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This is the home's first inspection under the new registration.

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 meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.</p> <p>(Regulation 5(d))</p>	29/05/2020
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>understand the child's health and well-being needs and options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's health and well-being needs.</p> <p>(Regulation 10(1)(2)(a)(ii))</p>	29/05/2020
<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>	29/05/2020

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff 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>(Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(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 that staff—</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm.</p> <p>(Regulation (12)(1)(2)(a)(iii)) *</p>	<p>29/05/2020</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</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received;</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)(1)(e)(g)(ii)(h)) *</p>	<p>29/05/2020</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p>	<p>29/05/2020</p>

have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.	
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(Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)) *	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

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: 2548567

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Registered provider address: Worcestershire Children First, County Hall Campus, Spetchley Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 2NP

Responsible individual: Adam Johnston

Registered manager: Alan McGonigle

Inspectors

Louise Battersby, social care inspector
Mrs Dawn Bennett, social care inspector

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