

# 2510090

**NML Care Ltd**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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

This home is operated by a private provider and is registered to provide care and accommodation for three children who have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager in post has submitted her application for registration to Ofsted.

**Inspection date:** 1 and 2 July 2020

## **This monitoring visit**

The home was judged inadequate at a full inspection on 29 and 30 January 2020, when eight requirements were raised. The home closed temporarily. Following a monitoring inspection on 26 March 2020, Ofsted deemed that the home was ready to reopen. As a result, Ofsted lifted a condition that had been imposed on the home's registration requiring the provider to inform Ofsted prior to admitting any child to the home. This visit was undertaken to monitor progress made since the home reopened.

The inspector conducted this monitoring visit remotely to comply with government guidance regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus). The inspector reviewed documents, and telephone and video calls were carried out with children, staff, the manager, the responsible individual and the director. Feedback was also received from professionals outside the home.

Children are well supported with their education by staff. During the recent period of restrictions imposed on children attending school during COVID-19, staff have helped children to complete significant amounts of work. The manager liaises closely with school and challenges teaching staff appropriately and in children's best interests. This means that children have good opportunities to progress with their learning.

The manager has considered risks relating to children before they move into the home. She has made sure that staff are given clear guidance through risk assessments, so they can work effectively to keep children safe.

Children's placement plans include all known information about them, and this guides staff in how to care for children appropriately. These documents are also produced in a child-friendly format. For example, before children arrive, the manager puts in place a clear routine that is presented to children in a bright and accessible way.

However, the manager and staff do not ensure that the presentation of documents is consistently good. While this does not detract from their overall usefulness, the lack of attention to detail has the potential to undermine the quality of information contained in children's records and the message this gives to children.

Staff work hard to think holistically about children and help them make sense of their emotions. For example, staff have introduced a variety of tools to help children express their feelings non-verbally, which in turn is helping children learn how to talk about their feelings. This shows children that they are valued and the way in which they express themselves is important. Furthermore, it helps to improve children's emotional well-being.

The manager has put in place some good monitoring systems. These help the manager to have better oversight of staff practice and ensure that children's care is regularly reviewed and that developments, such as changes to staffing ratios where needed, are put in place.

Staff use physical intervention infrequently, and incident records have improved since the last visit. However, staff do not yet include all details of techniques used, and managers and senior workers do not show sufficient professional curiosity and challenge in conversations with staff after these incidents. As a result of this, learning from these incidents is limited.

The manager and leaders cannot clearly evidence that recruitment checks are consistently and comprehensively carried out as records are disorganised. Gaps in employment history and information noted on application forms are not discussed at interview. In addition, information shared at interview is not routinely verified. This indicates that recruitment practice has the potential to be unsafe, and managers at all levels of the organisation cannot evidence their decision-making.

The manager has not noted that some care planning documents have included incorrect information about school and the home. This has now been raised with the child's placing authority, which is working to provide documents with correct details in them. This has not had an impact on the care children receive.

The organisation commissions support from a counselling psychologist in the home. This professional's details have not yet been included in the statement of purpose as they should be.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2020	Full	Inadequate

## 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
The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (3)(d))	13/08/2020
The registered person must ensure that— 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— a description of the measure and its duration; 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”)— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(b)(i))	13/08/2020

### Recommendations

- The information set out in the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child’s assessed needs. (‘Guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.6)  
In particular, ensure that qualifications for staff, including commissioned staff, are included in the home’s statement of purpose.
- All children’s case records (reg 36) must be kept up to date. (‘Guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.3)  
In particular, the home should have accurate care planning documents and meeting minutes.

### 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.

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that COVID-19 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.

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** 2510090

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

**Registered provider:** NML Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 253 Alcester Road South, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 6DT

**Responsible individual:** Darren Smallman

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## **Inspector**

Karol Keenan, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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