

1271607

Options Autism (4) Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for children and young people who have a range of complex needs and/or autism spectrum disorder and associated learning disability. Children and young people are aged between eight and 18 years old.

The manager holds the NVQ level 4 in leadership and management and was registered with the home in May 2020.

Inspection date: 2 July 2020

This monitoring visit

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to investigate concerns raised by external professionals about the safeguarding practices of staff. Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, Ofsted did not physically visit the home. Instead, the inspectors gathered evidence in several different ways, including talking to the manager, children's social workers, children's families and members of staff. The manager also provided electronic documents for the inspectors to review.

Staff manage children with complex needs well. Any concerns or allegations are referred to the relevant authorities. Appropriate strategies are put in place to protect children's well-being and safety while concerns are investigated. Additional staff members are deployed when managers feel this is necessary to meet children's needs.

Managers and staff work in partnership with health professionals to best meet children's healthcare needs. Social workers and parents are complimentary about the care that staff give to their children. As a result, children are having their health needs well met.

Staff know the children well and work hard to maintain their dignity and welfare when they display challenging behaviour. However, this is not always reflected in the

records that staff complete. Monitoring systems have not picked up that staff do not always follow children's bedtime care routines as outlined in their relevant plans. Mistakes in record-keeping have not been identified, and incident reports, sleep records and night-time logs are not consistently completed. This means that managers do not have a clear understanding of staff practice.

A new member of staff has been employed and, despite having worked in children's homes for five years, has not yet obtained the required qualification in residential care. Consequently, this member of staff is outside the required timescales to achieve the expected level of qualification in residential care.

One requirement and one recommendation have been raised at this inspection. The three requirements raised at the last inspection were not examined during this monitoring visit. As a result, these will be considered at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/12/2018	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>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— Are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(vii))</p>	31/07/2020
<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 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 ensure— that staff— have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(h))</p>	31/07/2020
<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))</p>	31/07/2020
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is—</p>	31/01/2021

in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.

The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—
does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or
works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b)(6)(a)(b))

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded 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

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.

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.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1271607

Provision sub-type: n/a

Registered provider: Options Autism (4) Ltd

Registered provider address: Options Autism (4) Ltd, Turnpike Gate House,
Alcester Heath, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Mark Williams

Registered manager: Caroline Adams-Evans

Inspectors

Louise Battersby, social care inspector

Sue Young, social care inspector

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