

1244413

# Assurance visit

## Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Visit dates:** 9 to 10 September 2020

**Previous inspection date:** 27 February 2020

**Previous inspection judgement:** Sustained effectiveness

## Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

## **The care of children**

Children are relaxed and happy in the company of staff and have secure and trusting relationships with them. One child spoke about how well the staff looked after him and how they helped him to settle into the home.

Staff encourage children to use all available means of communication, including social media, to keep in touch with their friends and families during COVID-19 restrictions. Staff make sure that these arrangements are safe and that these are agreed with the children's social workers. This means that children are not isolated.

Children access the specialist services that they need to support their mental health and emotional well-being. Staff are responsive to these needs and understand how these impact on children's welfare and resilience. As a result, children make good progress in this area of their development.

Staff supported children effectively with their education when they were unable to attend school due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This continued learning gave children a daily routine and helped them to return to school. The social worker for one child said, 'Staff go beyond their remit to support the children's transition back to full-time school.'

## **The safety of children**

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the risks to children's safety. Children do not go missing and they rarely display negative behaviours. When incidents do occur, the staff follow the children's behaviour management plans to quickly and successfully de-escalate these behaviours. This means that the children learn how to better manage their emotions and frustrations.

The children understand the current national issues that impact on their lives. For example, good-quality key-work sessions with staff help the children to explore their thoughts and feelings about the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff work with the children to help them to discover a range of enjoyable activities that follow government rules and guidance. This means that the children are able to continue to enjoy their leisure time.

There have been occasions when staff have not followed safeguarding and whistle-blowing procedures. This potentially placed children at risk of harm. However, leaders and managers quickly arranged additional safeguarding training to address this shortfall. As a result, staff respond effectively to allegations, which helps to protect children from harm.

## **Leaders and managers**

The registered manager has been in post since August 2018. She knows the children well and has a good understanding of their needs. The registered manager and staff work well with a range of other professionals. Social workers gave positive feedback

about the home. They made particular reference to good communication between staff and the local authority, and said that they felt that staff practice focused on good outcomes for children.

Staff record when they use physical restraint to manage the children's behaviours. However, they do not always complete these documents without delay. The registered manager does not monitor the quality of these records within acceptable timescales. She does not ensure that these contain all relevant information or the children's comments. These incomplete documents mean that there is not an accurate record of physical restraints. As a result, the registered manager is unable to determine if the use of physical restraint is always proportionate and necessary to keep children safe.

The registered manager does not make sure that staff's training records are up to date. This means that the registered manager does not have a good oversight of the training courses that staff complete. As a result, she cannot ensure that all staff always have the skills that they need to meet the children's needs.

The registered manager does not ensure that the required record of visitors to the home is accurate. For example, a visit from a social worker was not recorded and the inspector was not asked to sign in at the start of this assurance visit. This will make it difficult to trace any outbreak of COVID-19 and means that the registered manager does not always know who visits the home, when, or for what reason.

The registered manager does not ensure that all staff receive practice-related supervision. This means that staff do not reflect on the impact that their actions and practice have on the experiences and progress of children.

## 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 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>	30/10/2020

<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; and</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)(c)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager should keep accurate records to demonstrate management oversight of staff training and the use of physical restraint.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</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.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	30/10/2020
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4.</p> <p>(Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, Schedule 4 (5) requires that an accurate record is kept of all visitors to the home.</p>	30/10/2020

## Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, such as teachers and social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

In particular, that staff supervision reflects on the impact their practice has on the experiences of children that any issues related to staff practice are discussed and recorded.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1244413

**Registered provider:** No. 57 Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

**Responsible individual:** Amanda Quinn

**Registered manager:** Alison List

## Inspector

Deb Duffy, Social Care Inspector

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