

1234432

# Assurance visit

## Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2016.

**Visit dates:** 21 to 22 October 2020

**Previous inspection date:** 10 March 2020

**Previous inspection judgement:** Improved 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 enjoy positive and trusting relationships with the manager and staff. Children said that the staff are nice and always listen to what they have to say. They know that staff will always try to help them and want them to be happy.

The manager and staff provide children with individualised care that meets their assessed needs. Children benefit from suitable daily routines, structure and consistent boundaries. They feel settled and have a strong sense of security. The manager and staff have helped children to understand COVID-19 and how to keep safe and healthy. Children have coped well with the restrictions placed on their lives. They can talk freely about their feelings and frustrations about the situation.

Children continued to keep in touch with their families during the COVID-19 lockdown. With the easing of these restrictions, staff have supported children to see their families, including staying overnight where this has been possible. When there are difficulties in children spending time with their families, the manager and staff have made every effort to sort things out. They have helped children to rebuild positive relationships with important people in their lives.

Children have returned to full-time education. They are doing well and have excellent attendance. The manager and staff promoted and supported children's learning while the schools were closed. When children struggle in school, the manager and staff work with teachers to sort out any problems. Together, they make sure that children are getting the right support to achieve their potential.

Staff monitor children's health and emotional well-being carefully. They make sure that children always receive suitable advice, services and treatment to meet their specific health needs.

## **The safety of children**

Children feel safe and staff protect them from harm. The manager and staff monitor children's welfare closely. They identify and manage risks to children's safety effectively. They take appropriate action when they have concerns about children.

Staff support children to manage their own safety both inside and outside the home. They help children to understand what makes a healthy relationship and how to use technology and social media safely. Children stay in touch with staff when they go out, and they come home on time. Staff support children to follow the COVID-19 guidance about social distancing, washing hands and wearing protective equipment.

Children feel able to talk to the manager and staff about their worries. They know that the manager and staff take their worries seriously and will sort out any problems.

Staff have the competence to build warm and constructive relationships with children. They provide children with clear and consistent expectations for behaviour.

Positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and rewards. Any unacceptable behaviour is challenged and discussed. Staff help children to understand the impact of their actions on other people. They encourage children to develop understanding and empathy towards each other.

Staff help children to learn how to manage their feelings safely. Staff are confident in discussing sensitive issues with children. They understand that children may communicate their adverse experiences and their current feelings through their behaviour.

Staff's calm approach helps children to talk about what is upsetting them. Children said that staff do the right things to help them when they are unhappy or feel frustrated.

### **Leaders and managers**

The manager is very experienced and suitably qualified. The manager always places the well-being of children at the centre of the home's practice and decision-making.

The manager and staff have worked together effectively to find ways to support children to make measurable progress during the COVID-19 pandemic. The manager has dealt with the restrictions safely and appropriately. She has made sure that children and staff understand and follow the latest guidance. Any disruptions to children's lives have been minimised.

Children's plans, including their education plans, have continued to be followed and reviewed regularly. The manager and staff have strong relationships with partner agencies. They work together effectively to identify and continue to meet children's needs.

The staffing arrangements provide children with continuity of care. Staff work together well and provide children with consistent care and support. Children are always looked after by skilled and experienced staff who know them well. There are enough suitable staff available to cover any vacancy and respond flexibly to any unexpected changes.

Staff have the right support, advice, guidance and training. Regular practice-related supervision and team meetings enable staff to reflect on their work with children, share good practice and identify their learning needs.

The manager uses detailed monitoring and review systems to have a clear understanding of the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on children's progress and experiences.

However, the manager's review of the quality of care report has not been sent to Ofsted within the required timescale. Also, the internal and external monitoring of the home does not include the views of children, their families, social workers and

other professionals to gain a fuller understanding of the home’s effectiveness in looking after 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>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.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and</p> <p>make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(b)(4)(a)(b)(5))</p>	<p>30/11/2020</p>

### Recommendations

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home’s arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home’s care. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 65, paragraph 15.5) In particular, the independent visitor should seek the views of children, parents and relatives, professionals and other stakeholders about the quality of care provided.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1234432

**Registered provider:** Lytham Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 400 Longmoor Lane, Fazakerley, Liverpool L9 9DB

**Responsible individual:** Pamela Constance

**Registered manager:** Rosario Geraghty

## Inspector

Nick Veysey, Social Care Inspector

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