

2515609

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide medium- to long-term care and accommodation for two children or young people aged between five and 18 years. The children and young people may have physical disabilities, sensory impairments and complex learning, social, emotional and/or behavioural needs.

The current manager registered with Ofsted in February 2019.

Visit dates: 14 to 15 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 25 September 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Requires improvement to be good

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 have significant health needs and physical disabilities. Staff are considerate and supportive to their needs and provide a caring environment.

During COVID-19, staff support children to maintain important relationships with family, friends and people who help them, with use of video calls and garden visits. Staff consult with children about what they like to do and ensure that they take part in a range of activities that reflect their individual interests. This proactive practice means that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a minimal impact on children's day-to-day experiences. For example, children continued to enjoy baking and video game competitions.

The registered manager and staff support one child to attend college. The child told the inspector that staff provide him with good support to maintain his college placement. Another child recently started a new education placement at a specialist school after a prolonged period out of education for health reasons. The registered manager ensured that the child's transition was well managed. Unfortunately, the placement has ended prematurely through no fault of the child. The child continues to engage in education in the home while a suitable alternative placement is sourced. The manager is appropriately advocating on the child's behalf to ensure that he returns to an education provision without delay.

Staff consult children regularly about their care. Key-worker sessions provide children with the chance to discuss topics of concern, to improve the quality of care they receive. The manager is following up with social workers about the children having access to an independent advocate. This work is ongoing and so a recommendation, raised previously, will be repeated.

Children's specific health needs are well managed by staff and staff support children at complex medical appointments. Staff regularly review children's health plans to ensure that they receive care in line with their needs. However, there are some gaps in staff training. For example, staff have not completed specialist training in relation to physical disabilities. This is a missed opportunity for staff to update their knowledge and develop their practice.

The home is a clean and tidy environment for children. Some adaptations recommended at the previous monitoring visit have been implemented. For example, the kitchen sink has been made more accessible and the doorways to the kitchen and main hall have been widened. However, one child still struggles to leave and enter the home independently and a broken drain cover poses a possible risk to wheelchair users. The registered manager plans to rectify these shortfalls

imminently. Some other aspects of the home present as clinical and in need of redecoration to further improve the homeliness of the environment.

The safety of children

Staff understand and manage the risks associated with each child. They provide appropriate supervision and support to keep children safe. The registered manager ensures that children's risk assessments and plans are regularly reviewed. As a result, they receive care in line with their needs.

Staff follow agreed medical protocols and seek appropriate health advice when needed. Processes to manage and administer medication are robust and well managed.

The home environment is safe and secure. Staff provide children with appropriate supervision and support to safely access the local community. Staff support children to take appropriate risks in line with their independence plans.

Staff support children to understand the risks associated with online activities including gaming, social media and video calling. This enables the children to use the internet safely.

Fire precautions in the home are not always appropriately adhered to. For example, during the inspection, a smoke alarm in the kitchen had been temporarily disabled by staff. This placed children at unnecessary risk in the event of a fire.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager has been in post since December 2018. A recently appointed team leader will provide additional management oversight and support. This additional resource has the potential to enhance staff practice and continue to improve the quality of care children receive.

When information is not received to inform children's care and planning, the manager challenges placing authority staff. She has developed effective relationships with children's social workers, which helps this process. The manager strongly advocates on the children's behalf, which promotes children's welfare and progress.

The registered manager has effective oversight of the day-to-day running of the home. In-depth oversight of documents and key performance data enables her to review, assess and plan for the home. As a result, the registered manager continues to develop staff practice.

Staff receive regular and appropriate supervision. They continue to work towards achieving the required qualification for their role. As a result, staff are well supported to undertake their role and provide good care to 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
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a))	27/11/2020
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person should seek specialist advice to ensure that the environment is suitably equipped and accessible for wheelchair use.	18/12/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should consider the use of an independent advocate (see paragraph 4.16) if the child's needs are not being met. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person must ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of children; administer basic first aid and minor illness treatment; help children to manage long-term conditions and where necessary meet specific individual health needs arising from a disability, chronic condition or other complex needs. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2515609

Registered provider: Progress Children's Services

Registered provider address: Progress House, 127 Millfields Road,
Wolverhampton, Staffordshire WV4 6JG

Responsible individual: Claire Rogers

Registered manager: Deana Galsworthy

Inspectors

James Tallis, Social Care Inspector
Gareth Leckey, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020