

1255747

# Assurance visit

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people with complex needs, which may include challenging behaviours and/or emotional needs.

The registered manager left in August 2020. The new manager has been in post since September 2020 and is yet to be registered with Ofsted.

**Visit dates:** 27 to 28 October 2020

**Previous inspection date:** 16 October 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**

There have been several changes of manager and a high staff turnover since April 2020. This has had an impact on the stability of staffing. Consequently, it has been difficult for children to maintain strong relationships with the adults who look after them. Since April 2020, seven children have moved on from the home and four children have moved in. Most of the moves were planned and positive. In two cases, the children moved to a provision that could better meet their needs.

Since the promotion of the deputy to manager and recruitment of permanent staff, there has been a more consistent staff team. This has enabled the children to begin to build relationships with a more permanent staff team. A child said, 'It is so much better now that we have staff who want to stay.'

The children benefit from clear, structured routines and spending quality time with the staff. The staff and children took part in planned activities to keep them busy during the period of the COVID-19 restrictions. The children have been involved in redecorating the house and buying new furniture. A child said that the house feels more like a home now.

The children have been able to engage with education during the period of restrictions and since the restrictions have eased. One child has been able to attend college and other children have had virtual lessons or benefited from tutors visiting the home.

The children have kept in touch with their families. The staff worked with social workers to ensure that this happened. Children were given extra phone credit during the time of restrictions on face-to-face meetings, so that they could stay in touch with people who are important to them.

### **The safety of children**

There have been two serious safeguarding concerns. The manager and responsible individual managed these well, informing the designated officer and other relevant professionals. The manager took robust action to manage the concerns and worked with the staff to reflect on the learning from these incidents and to ensure that the staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding the children.

Comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans are in place. The staff review them regularly with the children and update the assessments after an incident or concern. These actions help children to invest in their plans and provide current guidance to the staff.

The staff have been proactive in ensuring that the children understand the risks posed by the pandemic. The children say that this has helped them to feel safe because they have a better understanding of COVID-19.

The children say that staff listen to them if they have a complaint. The children attend regular house meetings to discuss things that are worrying or concerning them.

### **Leaders and managers**

The manager undertakes comprehensive monitoring of the home. She has put extra monitoring checks in place following the safeguarding concerns.

The independent visitor continues to monitor the home and speaks with the staff and children. The visitor's reports are shared with the staff and contribute to the development of the home.

The staff receive regular supervision that supports them to work with children effectively and to develop their practice.

The staff have undertaken the organisation's mandatory training. Staff have achieved or are undertaking a relevant level 3 qualification. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, induction training has been reduced from 3 weeks to 2 weeks with some training being completed online. However, safeguarding and safe and sound training was completed face to face. This means that staff have still been able to complete the required training before beginning to work at the home. The manager uses supervision to ensure that staff understand the training that they have received.

The manager has met three of the four requirements and the four recommendations that were raised at the last inspection.

### **What does the children's home need to do to improve?**

#### **Recommendations**

- The registered person must achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the employment of any temporary staff will not prevent children from receiving the continuity of care that they need. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, 'page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Maintain a stable staff team so that children can build and sustain good-quality relationships with the adults who care for them.

- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, 'page 43, paragraph 9.12)

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1255747

**Registered provider:** Homes 2 Inspire Limited

**Registered provider address:** Suite 3h, Valiant Office Suites, Valley Drive, Swift Valley Industrial Estate, Rugby CV21 1TQ

**Responsible individual:** Angela Muchatuta

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Trish Palmer, Social Care Inspector

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