

1228522

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural needs. The home also provides care and accommodation for children with moderate learning disabilities.

There is a manager in post who has not yet been registered with Ofsted. He started his post in February 2020.

Visit dates: 27 to 28 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 28 January 2020

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

Young people told the inspector that there are staff in the home they can talk to and that they feel cared for. One young person had just moved into the home and said she was already developing positive relationships with staff. The inspector observed a nurturing approach with the young people, which has been key to enable staff to build trusting relationships with them.

Staff have a good understanding of the young people's needs. They use effective communication skills and strategies, to help young people who struggle to express their feelings. Young people engage in regular sessions with the home's clinical psychologist, which helps to support their emotional well-being.

The team has worked proactively to ensure that young people have access to suitable levels of education and has worked well with education providers to obtain this. This has included staff supporting young people within their education provisions and ensuring that education routines have been promoted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the pandemic, the staff and young people have created an album called 'Our journey through COVID-19'. This shows how young people's relationships with each other have improved by spending positive time together and engaging in creative activities with staff. The home has also been proactive in educating young people about keeping safe during the pandemic.

When young people have moved from the home, transitions have been planned effectively. Where government restrictions have allowed, young people have had opportunities to become acquainted with their new home, including going on overnight stays and visits. Independence skills are actively promoted with all young people in the home, and for the older young people there are clear independence plans in place.

Some young people have free time to explore the local area with friends, but this is time limited in relation to their needs. There are no written plans to evidence why young people's free time is restricted or how their free time will be progressed. Equally, there is no evidence to show that the young person understands the plan and that the social worker has agreed it.

The safety of children

Young people told the inspector that they feel safe in the home. Parents and social workers confirmed that they feel young people are kept safe. The staff team implements clear and consistent boundaries that contribute to the young people

feeling secure. There is evidence that young people have made progress while living at the home, in relation to reducing risks associated with exploitation or self-harm.

Missing-from-home records are detailed. They demonstrate that staff respond appropriately when young people go missing from home and have a good understanding of the protocols. The use of restraint in the home has significantly reduced in the last few months. Debriefs with young people and staff have been instrumental in helping everyone involved to understand triggers leading to restraint, which has contributed to the reduction in the levels of restraint in the home.

Risk assessments identify preventative measures and include up-to-date chronologies of risk-taking behaviour for young people. They give staff clear direction of how to support young people to de-escalate their behaviour effectively. Furthermore, staff understand individual risks for young people and act to safeguard them where necessary.

Lessons have been learned from incidents and have been used to improve the staff team's ability to manage challenging behaviour. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in police involvement to manage young people's behaviour in the home. Restorative work has also been effective in helping young people to make better choices and understand the consequences of their behaviour.

Young people living together have been encouraged to develop mutual respect and understand the impact their behaviour can have on others living in the home. Key-work sessions and working with the local police have been key in helping young people to explore each other's cultural differences, understand anti-bullying and zero tolerance to racism.

Impact risk assessments for admitting young people to the home are not robust. They do not consider and identify strategies to manage any potential impact of new young people on those already living in the home. Although there has been no impact on the well-being of young people, it potentially prevents the home from being able to safely match and manage behaviours between young people living together in placement.

Leaders and managers

The manager is enthusiastic about the work he does and has made changes to benefit and progress the young people. Feedback from social workers and parents includes, 'The manager and team go above and beyond.' The team has positive working relationships with other agencies, which are specific to young people's individualised needs.

There has been positive progress in the manager's oversight of the home and monitoring of behaviour records. The manager has addressed poor staff practice and as a result, the team's agreed approach to managing serious incidents has improved. However, the manager has not kept written records of any work completed with staff, which does not allow the manager to monitor or review staff

practice effectively.

Complaints in the home have reduced in the last few months. When young people have made complaints, these have been acknowledged in writing by managers, and young people have been spoken to about their concerns. However, there is no written record of the action taken or discussion with the young person in response to the outcome of any investigation.

Staff told the inspector that they receive positive levels of support and improved leadership from the current manager. Staff feel that because of this, the culture in the home is a positive one. The manager and the deputy manager have been proactive in ensuring that all staff have up-to-date training and regular supervisions.

The home currently does not have a manager who meets the regulatory requirements in relation to the management of residential childcare.

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—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>Specifically, to make effective use of impact risk assessments when considering admitting new young people to the home. To consider and identify strategies to manage any potential impact of new young people on those already living in the home.</p>	09/12/2020

<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(g)(ii))</p> <p>Specifically, following the manager's oversight of serious incidents or behaviour records, the manager keeps a written record of any work completed with staff to improve their practice.</p>	<p>09/12/2020</p>
<p>A person may only manage a children's home if—</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has—</p> <p>within the last 5 years, worked for at least 2 years in a position relevant to the residential care of children;</p> <p>worked for at least one year in a role requiring the supervision and management of staff working in a care role.</p> <p>(Regulation 28 (1) (2)(a)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, that the proposed manager has submitted their application to Ofsted within the timescale in this report.</p>	<p>09/12/2020</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.</p>	<p>09/12/2020</p>

(Regulation 39 (3))

Specifically, that there is written evidence of the investigation outcome and that this has been discussed with the young person, their views considered and recorded.

Recommendations

- In some cases, restriction of freedom may be necessary. Details about planned and agreed approaches to restraint or restriction of freedom to be applied in the day-to-day routine of the child must be included in their education, health and care plan, statement of special educational needs or within their care plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.43)

Specifically, where young people's free time is restricted, this should be clearly recorded and include rationale, any plans to progress the free time, evidence that the young person understands the reasons and that it has been agreed by the social worker.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1228522

Registered provider: Kedleston (Wood Grove Childcare) Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 8 Brook Business Centre, Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2FX

Responsible individual: Gillian Miele

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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