

1231311

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children with complex needs. The organisation states that it offers particular expertise in looking after children with suspected and enduring mental health needs.

The manager has applied to be registered with Ofsted. His application is currently being progressed. He is currently completing a level 5 diploma in leadership and management in residential childcare.

Visit dates: 3 to 4 November 2020

Previous inspection date: 11 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

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, children have been cared for by a committed staff team. Staff have worked hard during the pandemic to minimise the impact of restrictions on children's lives. Staff have found creative ways for children to have fun. For example, staff and children have developed their own vegetable garden, growing all their own produce and then using them to cook healthy home-made meals.

Staff have supported children's education. During the school closures in response to COVID-19, staff created daily workplans for the children. This positive attitude to learning has enabled one child to return to education after a significant period of time out of school.

Children are supported to stay in touch with people who are important to them. When COVID-19 restrictions prevented children visiting their family and friends, staff made sure these links were maintained using video calls.

The safety of children

Staff have helped children to understand the risks arising from COVID-19 and the implications for them individually. This sensitive work has helped children to make sense of the changing world around them. Significantly, this work has kept children safe. Children have followed the government guidance and there have not been any incidents of children going missing from home during this time.

Staff are well trained to manage challenging situations. Staff focus on de-escalation, and physical intervention is used as a last resort. As a result, incidents are decreasing. Children are proud of what they have achieved.

Detailed risk assessments are in place and staff ensure that these are regularly updated to reflect new and emerging risks. However, information about risk is contained in a range of children's plans. Because of this, it is not always clear that the risk assessment contains all of the information that staff require to enable them to understand how to respond to risky situations. This has resulted in staff not following up, as expected, when a child was believed to have accessed illegal drugs. Managers have recognised this as an area for further work to ensure that staff have access to information in one place.

Managers ensure that staff are safely recruited. This means that only people who are safe to work with children come to work in the home.

There have been improvements to the house and grounds. This helps to create a homely environment. However, staff's attention to children's personal space still lacks attention to detail. This does not promote children's understanding of how to take care of their possessions.

Leaders and managers

The new manager is making changes in the home. He is instilling a culture where staff take both individual and team responsibility for the care that children receive. As a result, there have been some positive improvements, resulting in four of the six requirements from the last inspection being met. The manager and the responsible individual recognise that there are still improvements to be made. This is reflected in two requirements from the last inspection being raised again. In addition, one new requirement and one recommendation have also been raised as a result of this assurance visit.

Staff report that they are well supported by the manager. This has been particularly important to staff during the COVID-19 pandemic and has helped them to successfully balance the impact of the pandemic on their work and home lives.

Improvements in arrangements for staff supervision mean that permanent and regular agency staff who work in the home receive supervision. This ensures that staff have a regular opportunity to reflect on and develop their practice.

There continues to be an over-reliance on the use of temporary staff working in the home. This has the potential to impact the consistency of children's care.

The manager is developing systems to support his oversight of the home. This is aided by the implementation of an electronic recording system, which is now embedded in the home. However, the manager's systems are not yet fully effective. For example, the manager's oversight does not yet identify and reflect on patterns and trends.

The manager has completed a quality of care review of the home. However, this does not include the views of children. In addition, the manager has not identified that the reports of visits to the home do not routinely include feedback from key stakeholders. These are missed opportunities to ensure that the development of the service takes account of wider views.

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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered provider;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(v)(d))</p>	31/12/2020
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>Use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(e)(h))</p>	31/12/2020
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <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>	31/12/2020

<p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	
---	--

Recommendations

- The provider must ensure that 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)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1231311

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Registered provider address: 16 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV1 4BL

Responsible individual: Rachel Oliver

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Tracey Coglan Greig, 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