

SC462951

ERA Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small number of homes that are run by an independent provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children aged between 11 and 18 who cannot live with their own families. The children require support and help in order to manage their emotions and behaviour.

There has not been a registered manager since 14 September 2020.

Inspection date: 10 March 2021

This monitoring visit

The visit took place to follow up issues from statutory notifications and independent reports on the home. The visit took place remotely. It included telephone conversations with the young person living at the home, the manager, staff and social workers, and review of documents.

Until recently, there were two young people living at the home. One of the young people had to move following some significant events. His social worker said that the breakdown was due to events outside of the home and that the staff could not have predicted or prevented it. The registered manager left on 14 September 2020. The role was being covered by the assistant manager, who has also left. A director, the previous responsible individual, is covering the manager's post while recruitment continues. He is in the process of applying to register. Staff are positive about the interim management arrangements.

Young people make progress because they are living at the home. The young person who is currently living at the home is happy to be there. He gets on well with the staff, enjoys helping with decorating and feels well cared for.

Staff consult with young people's individual health workers and the in-house therapist. This helps the staff to work with children effectively, manage their behaviour and meet their needs.

The risk assessments for young people give staff guidance on how to keep them safe and manage their behaviour. Staff help young people to keep safe by making sure that they get support from specialist services, such as substance misuse services, and by helping them to understand risk. The staff respond appropriately when young people go missing and have successfully challenged adults who were encouraging the young people to go missing or to get into cars. There have been times when young people have gone missing and have not had return home interviews to try and understand their reasons for leaving. Although these interviews are the responsibility of the placing authority, the managers or acting managers have not regularly advocated for them to happen.

Managers undertake matching exercises to prevent the likelihood of young people moving into the home if they are likely to have a negative impact on those already living there. However, these assessments do not always consider all the relevant information. This limits an important safeguard for those living at the home.

Staff are trained in managing behaviour. This helps them to respond appropriately when, as one young person said, 'Things get out of hand.' The young person said that staff are good at this. Sometimes, staff use financial sanctions in response to children's behaviour. These financial sanctions are not always for reparation for damage. Therefore, they are inappropriate and not permitted by the regulations.

It was a requirement from the previous inspection that all staff who have worked at a children's home for more than two years are qualified. While work has continued to achieve this, as a result of problems with the qualification providers, it has not yet been completed. The requirement has been repeated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2019	Full	Good
07/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/05/2018	Full	Good
17/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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>No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child.</p> <p>The following measures may not be used to discipline any child—</p> <p>imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(f))</p>	30 April 2021
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p>	30 July 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should take reasonable steps to ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

Information about this inspection

This monitoring visit was to follow up issues from statutory notifications and independent reports on the home.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC462951

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: ERA Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 3a, The Maltings, Station Road,
Sawbridgeworth CM21 9JX

Responsible individual: Francis Williams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Clive Lucas, Social Care Inspector

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