

1231458

Sherlock Healthcare Services Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a private children's home offering care and accommodation for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The home has no registered manager. The deputy manager has taken over the day-to-day running of the home. She has a good understanding of the home, and her application to register with Ofsted is in progress.

Inspection date: 3 February 2021

This home was judged good at the last full inspection in July 2019. At the interim inspection in December 2019, Ofsted judged that it had sustained effectiveness.

This monitoring inspection was conducted in response to a significant number of safeguarding notifications from the home. The majority of these relate to children who go missing from the home. Given current COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions, when children go missing they are exposed to additional risk. Recent safeguarding notifications also relate to some children self-harming and police needing to be called to the home after significant damage to property.

Managers and staff respond with urgency to children who go missing from home or self-harm. The provider's safeguarding policy is clear and implemented by staff without delay. Children are always offered an opportunity to speak with an independent person or a member of staff on their return to the home. Children do not always engage with these conversations, so there is not always a comprehensive understanding about where children have been or with whom.

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home and three have moved in. There have been changes in staffing, including the manager leaving in January 2020. Continuity has been maintained, as the current acting manager has a good understanding of the home. The home has experienced some staffing challenges due to the impact of COVID-19, and managers have used agency staff in

the past month to maintain a full staff team. Managers have been proactive in recruiting staff to cover forthcoming maternity leave. Children at times have felt unsettled with the changes in staff and, in particular, the use of agency staff.

Staff spoken with during the inspection feel supported by managers both professionally and personally. Staff have opportunities to continue their professional development, and training is targeted at the identified needs of the children. Working relationships and communication with professionals and partners in the local area are effective in ensuring that the safeguarding needs of children who go missing from home are understood and responded to.

Managers and staff seek to understand the needs of the children in their care. Support and information-sharing for those children who have recently left the home were evident and supportive of their ongoing needs. Managers feel that they and the staff team have developed experience and expertise in supporting children who go missing from home and have indicated that this is an area they wish to specialise in. Managers are aware that they will need to carefully consider the longer-term cumulative impact on staff and children in the home in these circumstances and would need to carefully and sensitively ensure appropriate risk assessment and matching of children in the home.

Children were engaged in education activity at the time of the visit and were supported and encouraged by staff. The children and staff told the inspector that it is harder for children to stay motivated both academically and generally now that they are in the third period of COVID-19 restrictions. The atmosphere in the home was relaxed and homely with positive interactions between children and staff seen. Children's bedrooms seen were clean and tidy and personalised. Children were comfortable in approaching staff with queries and issues.

Children are aware of the home's complaints policy and have raised issues through this. In discussion with staff and some children, it was evident that there were ongoing tensions that had not been resolved following a recent incident. Both the manager and the responsible individual are aware of this matter and gave assurance that this would be resolved.

Damage to a number of areas in the home is evident from recent incidents. For example, the kitchen window remains boarded up after having been smashed, and there is damage to the kitchen door. Children and staff are eating from paper plates after plates have been repeatedly smashed. In addition, there is general maintenance work that is outstanding, and the lack of a tumble dryer means that clothes are drying on radiators around the home, including in children's bedrooms. Managers advise that maintenance work has been delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions and a new tumble dryer is on order. This is an area that requires immediate attention as a lack of respect for the home will have a negative impact on the morale of children and staff.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/07/2019	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

Requirement	Due date
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>(Regulation 6 (1) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children are provided with a well-maintained home.</p>	30 April 2021

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection as well as to consider serious incidents recently notified to Ofsted.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1231458

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Limited

Registered provider address: Sherlock Healthcare Services, 20–22 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU

Responsible individual: Hilton Mutariswa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Pauline Higham, Social Care Inspector

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