

1273497

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is a short-break home for seven children with learning disabilities.

The registered manager has managed this home for many years, and is suitably qualified and experienced.

The home is one of four homes run by this local authority children's trust.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 18 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 April 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 12 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 18 February 2021, Ofsted undertook a monitoring visit. Due to the shortfalls identified, two compliance notices were issued for regulation 13 and regulation 32.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/11/2019	Full	Good
19/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/08/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children are cared for by a familiar staff team. Many of the staff have worked at the home for several years. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to making sure that children's stays are enjoyable.

Staff are creative in providing stimulating activities for children. For example, children have helped to choose plants at a garden centre and plant them; they also chose colours for painting the outside seating, and painted it; in addition, they have baked, taken part in Easter egg hunts and had a virtual Christmas party. As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, staff have taken children to local parks to play and have picnics.

Staff have developed good working relationships with parents. Parents are positive about the home and the ongoing telephone support that they have received, which was especially important during times when the home was closed. Parents said that this contact was an important lifeline.

Staff support children to express their views through a variety of communication methods. The use of signs, symbols and technology means that children feel valued and listened to.

The staff help children to achieve milestones by organising day-to-day tasks that the children can participate in. Achievements are celebrated by staff, with children receiving certificates. This acknowledgement builds children's confidence and self-esteem.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, managers have carefully considered the matching of children. Managers have, where possible, kept children in the same bubble groups as they have in school, to reduce the risk of transmission. As a result, children have had positive stays with other children they know, and have enjoyed spending time with them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children are cared for by staff who know them well. Staff use this knowledge to keep children safe. However, risk management plans are not regularly updated following incidents, and they do not always provide clear direction for staff on the actions needed to reduce risks. Staff do not always follow risk management plans. This includes not recording the welfare checks completed with children as set out in those plans. These omissions could mean that children are at risk due to the inconsistency of care, and due to staff not acting or not knowing what action to take.

The home is welcoming and provides appropriate facilities for children to play and relax in. The gardens are particularly nice, with a well-maintained sensory garden and play equipment. However, the cleanliness of the home needs improving. For example, some area of the home need dusting and empty fridges require cleaning. Omissions were also found in reporting damage which could have posed a risk to children.

Allegations or suspicions that children might have been harmed are responded to and managed appropriately once they have been reported to managers. However, in one example there was a delay in staff reporting a concern to managers. In response to this, managers have provided additional training for staff in safeguarding procedures and whistle-blowing. Staff can now demonstrate a sound knowledge of these procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is managed by an experienced manager who is aspirational and cares about children having positive short breaks. Staff say they feel well supported and parents are complimentary about the manager.

Following the home's monitoring visit on 18 February 2021, compliance notices were issued for regulation 13 and regulation 32. Managers have met the compliance notice for regulation 13, but have not yet met the compliance notice for regulation 32. Specifically, managers have not ensured that all relevant safer recruitment checks have been completed for staff. This omission means that managers cannot assure themselves that the staff working at the home are suitable. The compliance notice will be reissued.

Staff who are new to the home do not receive a comprehensive induction or practice-related supervision in line with the organisation's policies. This shortfall means that new staff are not supported to develop the skills and knowledge they need to care for the children at the home, and do not have an opportunity to reflect on their practice.

Managers have undertaken a review of the quality of care. However, when undertaking this review, managers did not fully reflect on the previous period and gain views from a variety of stakeholders. This is a missed opportunity to inform the development of the service.

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 person;</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> <p>This specifically relates to risk assessments being updated following incidents; risk assessments having comprehensive details of the actions staff are to take to reduce risks; staff following children's plans to keep children safe; and ensuring that all areas of the home are clean and that any damage is promptly repaired.</p>	30 May 2021
<p>A responsible individual must—</p> <p>have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the responsible individual having oversight of the registered manager, and making sure that</p>	30 May 2021

<p>the registered manager is ensuring compliance with regulations.</p>	
<p>*The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers making sure that all staff are safely recruited and checks are undertaken as per schedule 2.</p>	<p>30 May 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to new staff having the skills and training needed to care for children at the home, and ensuring that they receive practice-related supervision in line with the organisation’s policy.</p>	<p>30 May 2021</p>

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1273497

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: Third Floor, Zone 16, 1 Lancaster Circus,
Birmingham B4 7DJ

Responsible individual: Melanie Page

Registered manager: Julie Clark

Inspectors

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector
James Tallis, Social Care Inspector

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