

1240883

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Holdco Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private organisation.

The provider states in their statement of purpose that they provide care for children with EBD (social and emotional difficulties)

The registered manager recently resigned from her post. However, Ofsted has not yet received a voluntary cancellation form.

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 8 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious failures that mean children are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 20 August 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/08/2019	Full	Good
29/05/2019	Full	Inadequate
05/06/2018	Full	Good
03/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the last visit, three children have moved out of the home and two children have moved in. Children's moves were not planned. This means that children have not moved on from the home in a positive way. The provider could not demonstrate how they have supported these children to make progress, and the risks in respect of one child increased throughout his time living at the home.

The two children currently living at the home have lived at the home for a short time. One child moved in just prior to the inspection. Therefore, it is difficult to measure any progress that these children have made. However, children told inspectors that they like living at the home and they were both positive about the staff team.

Children's plans do not clearly record what staff need to do to help children. For example, staff told inspectors that one child needs help to manage his food intake and that this was an issue at his previous placement. However, it is not clear what staff are expected to do to support the child.

One child is prescribed controlled medication. He refuses to take this medication and there was a delay in staff escalating this to healthcare professionals. This is necessary to understand the consequences on the child's health and well-being.

Children are supported to engage in education. During the inspection, one child was supported to attend an introductory session at his education placement and staff supported another child to complete some education at the home.

Inspectors found damage in the home environment. For example, one child's wardrobe is broken and there is damage to the stair bannister. As a result, children are not provided with a safe, homely and welcoming environment. Furthermore, children do not have access to all rooms in the home. This is because furniture and other items are stored in two rooms in the home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Since the previous monitoring visit, the provider received a complaint from a member of staff in relation to the poor practice of four members of staff. Inspectors found that leaders and managers did not take any action in respect of these allegations until three days after the allegations were made. Leaders and managers failed to put any immediate safeguards in place and the staff who were the subject of the allegation continued to work at the home. The failure to take any immediate action meant that children and staff were at risk of harm.

Leaders and managers do not understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Leaders and managers informed the designated officer that a complaint had been made. However, the provider made the decision that the allegation did not meet the threshold for referral to the designated officer. The designated officer subsequently asked the provider for further information in relation to the complaint. However, there was a delay in the provider sharing this information. These further delays meant that children continued to be at risk of harm.

Children's risk assessments do not include all known risks. This means that staff do not have access to risk management strategies to follow in practice. This is particularly in relation to the risk from criminal exploitation.

Missing from home plans and risk assessments contain conflicting information. This means that the actions for staff to follow are not clear. This is confusing for staff and means that strategies to reduce risk are inconsistent.

Staff told inspectors that drugs are available in the local area. This information is not included in the home's safe area risk assessment. This is a risk for children who have moved on from the home and the children who currently live at the home.

In Ofsted's view, the shortfalls highlighted demonstrate that safeguarding practice in the home is a serious concern and does not effectively protect children from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers are not leading and managing the home in a manner that is consistent with the home's statement of purpose. Leaders, managers and staff fail to demonstrate that they inspire and lead a culture that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential. This fails to demonstrate that the care meets the needs of children and promotes their safety and welfare.

The responsible individual told inspectors that the registered manager recently resigned from her post. The deputy manager is currently in day-to-day charge. He is not fully aware of the whistle-blower's complaint. This means that he cannot effectively monitor staff practice in the home. Therefore, he cannot make improvements in the quality of care provided for children.

Performance improvement plans were implemented in relation to the staff involved in the whistle-blower's complaint. However, one member of staff did not know what was included in her plan. This means that the plan is ineffective because improvements cannot be made in practice if staff do not know what they are expected to do.

The provider has not submitted a statement of purpose to Ofsted since June 2019. Not only is this a breach in regulation, but it is also a safeguarding concern because Ofsted does not know who is working at the home.

Records do not demonstrate that staff have received supervision in line with the statement of purpose. Some staff told inspectors that they have not had frequent supervision. This includes staff who are in their probation period. However, some staff said that this has recently improved. This means that there are missed opportunities to review staff practice and to ensure that staff are supported to develop within their roles.

The provider has failed to ensure that all staff attend relevant training to meet the needs of the children they are caring for. This does not ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge to support, safeguard and care for children. One staff member had completed 15 online training courses on the same day. Managers have not reviewed the effectiveness of this learning.

Shortfalls were also found in staff rosters. The provider needs to ensure that staff rosters record all the information as required by regulation.

There are delays in the provider notifying Ofsted of serious incidents in the home. This means that Ofsted cannot effectively monitor what is happening in the home to ensure that children are safe.

The provider has not submitted a report in line with regulation 45. This is a further breach in regulation because this requirement was made at the previous visit. This is a repeat requirement.

In Ofsted's view, the shortfalls highlighted demonstrate ineffective leadership and management practice that has compromised the experiences and progress of children living in this home. Therefore, children cannot reach their full potential and be protected from harm.

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>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</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; and</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)(e)</p>	4 July 2021

<p>This is particularly in relation to ensuring that the provider takes effective action to investigate any complaints or allegations against staff.</p> <p>Furthermore, the provider needs to ensure that all risks in respect of children are assessed and that risk assessments include strategies to help staff reduce the risk.</p>	
<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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h))</p> <p>The acting manager needs to ensure that he has oversight of any incidents in the home to understand the impact of the quality of care provided to children. This includes any allegations/complaints against staff.</p> <p>The acting manager needs to ensure that children's plans include all known information.</p>	<p>04 July 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p>	<p>30 July 2021</p>

<p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))</p>	
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b))</p> <p>The provider needs to ensure that children take medication in line with their plans. If this doesn't happen, then the provider needs to ensure that they seek medical support without any delay.</p>	30 July 2021
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a))</p> <p>The acting manager needs to ensure that he includes names and working hours on the staff rosters.</p>	30 July 2021
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>	30 July 2021
<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>	30 July 2021

<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;</p> <p>and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (4)(a))</p>	
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))</p> <p>This is particularly in relation to staff knowledge about the local area and any impact on children.</p>	<p>30 July 2021</p>

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 1240883

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Holdco Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate,
Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Danielle Maher

Registered manager: Katherine Yarker

Inspectors

Catherine Fargin, Social Care Inspector
Genevieve O'Reilly, Social Care Inspector

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