

# 2613341

Registered provider: iMapcentre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It provides care for up to nine children with learning disabilities.

The home was registered in December 2020. There has been no registered manager in post since May 2021.

### Inspection dates: 16 to 17 June 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 and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or 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:** Not applicable

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
No previous inspection		

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

The quality of care for children does not meet the home's statement of purpose. A significant part of the home's model of care is positive behaviour support. Initial positive behaviour support plans were created without observation of children's daily lives by the author. The new behaviour support team is reviewing the plans with the staff. Although the staff have trained in positive behaviour support, some do not feel confident in their skills to deliver this approach to help children.

Children have developed positive relationships with some members of staff. However, children do not receive consistent care from the team. Poor care planning and recording mean that small steps of progress are not captured in a meaningful way that shows children's experiences. It does not support understanding of children's needs or improving practice within the home.

The staff do not promote good structure and routines for children. Records show that children often remain awake, using electronic devices or watching television, until the early hours of the morning. Consequently, they remain in bed till the following afternoon. This does not support children to lead a healthy lifestyle or promote routines to support children to return to school.

Children's education is not promoted in the home. One child does not have access to an education provision, despite being in year 11. Another child has a plan to go to the provider's school in three months' time and is being visited by teaching assistants as part of a transition. There are no education plans on children's files to record the progress of the child's transition, or what the staff do to support children to overcome barriers to learning and understand the importance of education for their future aspirations. The lack of any plan means that the staff have little guidance and no central document to record what children are learning informally through activities. Furthermore, personal education plans from placing authorities are not on file. This means it is not possible to understand children's educational progress.

Detailed assessments and, for some children, lengthy transition plans are made to help children move to the home. However, pre-admission planning does not consider the needs of other children already living in the home. This lack of matching has disrupted a child's time with his family, due to the needs of another child living in the home.

Plans outline arrangements for children to spend time with their families and to speak with them on the telephone. However, a parent said that she could not speak to her child at a regular pre-arranged time because the telephone was not available. She said that her child is often still asleep when she telephones the home. This does not promote children's opportunities to maintain their family connections.

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

Risk assessments are in place for children. However, they contain unnecessary information and are not bespoke to individual children. This does not help the staff to identify the relevant risks easily or how they should respond.

One child's individual support plan stipulates that risk assessments must be completed for all activities away from the home. This is due to the risk of the child accessing public transport. On one occasion the staff failed to complete an activity risk assessment and during an activity the child went missing. Subsequent events meant that the child was arrested by the police after an incident at a railway station. Although the incident might not have been avoided, it highlights that staff fail to follow direction to keep children safe.

Preventable incidents have occurred due to the staff failing to understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. For example, a child accessed an area of the home because a fire door was wedged open. A child has accessed items such as scissors and a spanner that had not been stored safely in other areas of the home. The child has also accessed knives after breaking the locking system to a door connecting to a staff area. Furthermore, the failure by staff to follow the guidance in place meant that a child was able to access keys for the home and then remove the keys for the vehicle. This resulted in a serious incident that required police involvement. The staff continued to use a door connecting a child's living space to a separate staff area, despite being instructed not to do so after a previous incident. This means that children's and other people's safety is compromised.

There is damage in the home. One child is living in a poor environment. The carpets are badly stained, skirting boards are damaged and walls that have been repaired have not been repainted. One child is not sleeping in his bedroom because the safety cabinet for the television needs replacing and there is a delay in its manufacture. His bed is currently in the communal area, so he can watch television at night. The child's needs mean that he finds it difficult to cross new thresholds. However, the staff have not tried to develop a transition plan to move him to another part of the home until the repairs are completed.

The staff intervened effectively to remove ligatures from a child. However, records do not show the required information about the physical intervention, or whether the child was spoken to afterwards, to comply with the regulation. Some of the staff have been retrospectively debriefed by the responsible individual. There was some management oversight by the manager when she was involved in an incident. However, poor recording compromises children's safety and leaves the staff vulnerable to potential allegations.

Children refuse to leave the home during fire drills. There are no records of how the staff help children to understand what they must do in the event of an emergency.

The inspector was not told about fire procedures on arrival for the inspection. This puts children's and other people's safety at risk in the event of a fire.

Staff do not put consistent boundaries in place. Some staff appear reluctant to challenge children when they do not listen to guidance. This does not help children to manage their emotions more effectively. The language used to describe children in records is sometimes stigmatising and unhelpful.

When children have become upset and frustrated, the staff have sometimes resorted to calling the police to help them to manage children's behaviours. This puts children at risk of being criminalised. The responsible individual has reviewed records and recognises that most police callouts were unnecessary. He has met with a police officer to discuss how to move forward.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The responsible individual took over the day-to-day running of the home when the registered manager left in May 2021. He has conducted a thorough review of all incidents and identified shortfalls in procedures and practice within the home. He recognises that the staff need support to improve the quality of care provided for children. Better systems are in place for staff to understand children's needs through consultations with independent professionals as well as the behaviour team. However, it is too soon to see how changes are improving practice.

The registered manager worked on shift, during times of staff shortages, to support the team. Tasks were not delegated to individual members of staff until April 2021. The responsible individual could not provide support to the manager as anticipated. This means that the manager was overstretched and unable to fulfil the functions of her management role.

The staff team recognise that without effective leadership they have not provided consistent boundaries or levels of care that support children's safety, well-being and progress. Night staff feel unsupported and lack direction. A new deputy, who will work across shifts, and a senior night worker are yet to start in their roles.

Most of the staff do not hold a suitable qualification in children's residential care. The provider has failed to arrange for a training provider to review qualifications held by the staff and identify additional training required. The workforce plan does not consider the professional development needs of individual workers.

Some of the staff are supervised by an individual who is not trained to do so. The staff have not received supervision in line with the provider's policy. Some of the staff have not attended team meetings. Changes are now being made to improve the sharing of information. However, the staff have lacked opportunities to reflect on practice within a formal framework, and leaders and managers have not monitored performance regularly.

Shortages in the staff team mean that agency workers have been used, particularly at night. Children sometimes struggle with the changes in who looks after them and have not been supported to develop positive relationships with a stable staff team.

Leaders and managers have failed to implement robust care plans and assurance systems, to show that how they lead the culture of the home helps children fulfil their potential and is consistent with the home's statement of purpose. Independent monitoring is robust and has identified shortfalls and areas for improvement. The first review of the quality of care is in progress.

Following the visit four compliance notices were issued due to failings at the home.

## 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible.</p> <p>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii))</p> <p>In particular, that the registered person and the staff develop education plans to record actions taken to help children understand the importance of education and how they support children to overcome barriers to learning. When children are not attending school, they should be supported in informal learning and any progress and achievements should be recorded by the staff.</p>	8 August 2021
<p>* The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	8 August 2021

<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>help each child to understand and keep safe;</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>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 purpose 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)(ii)(iii)(v)(b)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the staff follow children’s individual plans and develop robust risk assessments, including for activities outside of the home. The registered person should ensure that the staff have the skills and understanding of how they should protect children and help them understand how to become safer. The home environment should be maintained to ensure that children have a positive experience of living in the home. The registered person should demonstrate what action has been taken to provide alternative living areas in the event of delay to repairs.</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>8 August 2021</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 the staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that the staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for children;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experience of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f))</p> <p>This specifically relates to leaders and managers ensuring that children’s plans are developed, and a system of review is in place to monitor and review progress. Leaders and managers should ensure that the home is led so that children are helped to achieve their potential in accordance with the statement of purpose. The staff team should have the skills, qualifications and experience to provide consistent care for children.</p>	
<p>* The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended</p>	<p>8 August 2021</p>

<p>that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's relevant parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(d))</p> <p>In particular, pre-admission planning should consider the compatibility needs of other children already living in the home. Care planning for children should be robust and guide the staff in their practice. Facilities should be available for children to speak with and see relatives in line with their relevant plans.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p>	<p>8 August 2021</p>

<p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
<p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, when children do not evacuate during a fire drill, that the staff ensure that they help children to understand through alternative methods what they need to do in the event of an emergency.</p>	8 August 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	8 August 2021
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p>	8 August 2021

<p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(iv))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person should ensure that the staff are supported to understand how they are to deliver consistent, individualised and good quality care, that helps children to make progress and that aligns with the home's statement of purpose.</p>	
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>(In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, that children should be helped to understand the importance of appropriate routines that promote their well-being, and that the staff help them to achieve this.</p>	<p>8 August 2021</p>

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the review of the location of the home considers specific risks for individual children, such as railway stations, and how the staff should respond to mitigate them in the event that a child leaves the building. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising way, that is helpful to the child if they

choose to read their records at a later date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plan contains the details of the staff team's current qualifications and identify any further training required. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

## **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:** 2613341

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** iMapcentre Limited

**Registered provider address:** Imap School, Barrowmore Estate, Barnhouse Lane,  
Great Barrow, CHESTER CH3 7JA

**Responsible individual:** Anthony Yearsley

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Karen Willson, Social Care Inspector

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