

1263124

Autonomy Plus Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to five children with a learning disability and additional needs.

The registered manager left on 16 April 2021 to become the responsible individual. The appointed manager has yet to register with Ofsted.

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.

Inspection date: 3 August 2021

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 28 and 29 June 2021. The inspection identified that leaders and managers had failed to ensure that suitable arrangements were in place for the safety and protection of children.

A compliance notice was issued under regulation 12, the protection of children standard. This monitoring visit was undertaken to review the action taken by the provider to comply with the notice.

Following the full inspection, senior leaders and the manager provided Ofsted with a plan detailing the action that they proposed to take to safeguard children and remedy the weaknesses. Leaders and managers have taken sufficient action to address the points in the compliance notice, but requirements will remain and be reviewed in full at the next inspection.

Since the full inspection, senior leaders and the manager have taken urgent action to review and amend all fire safety procedures. They have ensured that designated fire exits and garden gates can be opened without delay should there be an emergency. Consultation with a fire safety professional has led to a new fire risk assessment that

is now fit for purpose. Children have new personalised evacuation plans that suitably inform any staff member on how to support each child safely in the event of a fire. Firefighting equipment remains in the home but is now stored away out of sight while remaining accessible to staff. This arrangement adheres to suitable fire safety procedures without compromising the creation of a homely environment.

Leaders and managers have reviewed and implemented revised safeguarding procedures. Through team meetings and discussions in supervision, the staff team has been reminded of their responsibilities to ensure children are safeguarded effectively. All team members have completed training in safeguarding, read the revised procedures and confirmed their understanding of their duty to protect children and report any concerns they have.

Since the full inspection, the manager has demonstrated a sound understanding of safeguarding procedures and the requirement to report any incidents to other agencies without delay. Allegation management procedures have been correctly followed, with appropriate consultation with the designated officer.

Leaders and the manager have taken action to review the night-time supervision of children. Clear instructions have been written for night staff so that children are always appropriately supported and supervised. Improved systems are now in place for monitoring the actions of waking night staff, ensuring that they are completing tasks as required for the safety and welfare of children.

Children and young people are consulted about their night-time routine and the level of monitoring that is required. This ensures their safety and considers how to avoid compromising their privacy.

Leaders and managers are committed to making continual improvement for the safety and protection of children. Time is needed for new procedures to be implemented and embedded into daily practice. Ofsted will conduct a further full inspection of this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
09/09/2019	Full	Good
06/11/2018	Full	Good

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 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>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This refers to ensuring that there are prompt repairs to the home and removal of excessive fire notices, to create a homely environment.</p>	28 July 2021
<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>	28 July 2021

<p>help each child to understand how to 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>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 effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))</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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>	<p>28 July 2021</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</p>	<p>28 July 2021</p>

<p>registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>This refers to the prompt completion of applications as agreed in care plans, for example, for housing and deprivation of liberty safeguards.</p>	
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>the child’s placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child’s age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child’s need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that there is regular review of any monitoring devices used.</p>	28 July 2021
<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,</p> <p>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>	28 July 2021

<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>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; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that senior staff who provide supervision receive appropriate training to do so effectively.</p>	<p>28 July 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p>	<p>30 June 2021</p>

<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p> <p>A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))</p>	<p>28 July 2021</p>
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Recommendation

- The registered person is responsible for reviewing the quality of care. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in a written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. In particular, there should be a development plan for the home, informed by a review of the quality of care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1263124

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Autonomy Plus Limited

Registered provider address: 67 Roundpond, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 8EB

Responsible individual: Michael Evans

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector

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