

1240753

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Holdco Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The provider states in their statement of purpose that they provide care for children who have been involved in gangs or persistent and serious offending behaviour, and children at risk of or involved with radicalisation.

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

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 July 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected. Their welfare is not being promoted or safeguarded. The care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 4 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2019	Full	Good
12/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/05/2017	Full	Good
02/03/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the previous monitoring visit, three children have moved out of the home. One child remains living at the home.

Children's care has been compromised by insufficient levels of staff and poor safeguarding practice. This means that children's overall progress and experiences have been adversely affected.

Leaders and managers could not demonstrate how children are supported to make progress in their lives. Records are limited and do not show each child's journey and experiences. On several occasions, children have been found with drug paraphernalia and were known to be using illegal substances on a regular basis. No evidence of intervention was available, and staff could not explain how children are being supported to understand the risks to their health and well-being.

The ethos of the home, outlined in the home's statement of purpose, is to 'provide impeccable, bespoke and holistic care packages to children with assessed care needs we feel can be managed'. However, notice had been served on all of the children's placements. The decision had been made by the provider as staff could not meet the needs of children or keep them safe.

Since the last visit to the home, there have been several changes to the management and staff team. Therefore, children have not had the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with a consistent, supportive staff team. One child is currently staying with his family and he told the inspector that he does not want to return to the home. A family member said that she is very concerned that staff did not keep the child safe, and that communication from staff is poor.

Children's social workers describe numerous changes in the staff team, as also found by inspectors. One social worker said that this has impacted on her child because he requires consistency and structure as he struggles with change. She also said that communication in the home is poor. This has meant that, on occasions, she has not been aware of any concerns or risks for the child.

The home provides specialist support for children via a therapeutic programme. This is a three-phase therapeutic recovery programme. As part of this programme, children receive specialist help from qualified practitioners. However, it is not clear how this is included in children's plans to help staff care for children and meet their individual needs. Furthermore, children have not completed all stages of the programme. This does not demonstrate that children are supported to fulfil their potential.

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

Leaders and managers do not demonstrate that they have robust systems in place to reduce the risk of harm to children. There is not a strong proactive approach to reduce risk for children. This is specifically in relation to cannabis misuse and incidents when children are missing from home.

Children's risk assessments are not up to date. They do not include clear strategies for staff to follow to reduce the risk of harm for each child. In one example, managers had decided to stop a child having internet access in the home, due to the risks. However, managers and staff knew that the child had a mobile phone with access to the internet. Furthermore, the acting manager told inspectors that children use social media to find drug dealers to buy cannabis. Despite these known risks, appropriate strategies were not put in place to reduce the risk of harm.

Missing from home incidents for children have increased. At the time of the inspection, one child had been missing from home sporadically over a seven-day period. Staff did not consistently follow the child's missing from home plan and try to locate the child. During the inspection, staff did not know the child's whereabouts.

Staff do not provide the children with consistent boundaries. Staff report different approaches to safeguarding practice. Some staff are concerned about safeguarding practice in the home, for example an increase in cannabis misuse. Some staff had shared these concerns with leaders and managers. However, immediate action was not taken to consider or implement new and appropriate risk management strategies.

The previous responsible individual had undertaken a full audit of safeguarding concerns. She had identified relevant strategies that managers and staff are required to take to reduce the risk of harm to children who use illegal substances. None of these actions had been implemented.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is no registered manager in post. There is an acting manager who has been in post since March 2021. He has not submitted a completed application to Ofsted. The acting manager does not have a clear understanding of the improvements required in the home. He recognises that insufficient staffing is a concern. However, he does not understand the shortfalls in respect of his role in monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care that children receive.

Nine staff have left the home since the previous monitoring visit. However, leaders and managers have not considered the reasons for this. Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff have been given the opportunity to attend exit interviews. This is a missed opportunity to understand staff's reasons for leaving so that the provider can identify if any improvements are needed.

Training and development activities are not effective. Records show that two members of the staff team completed up to 30 mandatory training courses in one day. This is not effective and does not support staff in their development. Staff induction is also poor

Not all staff have received supervision to support them in their learning and development. Furthermore, one new member of staff has not had supervision in line with the induction policy. This means that the manager cannot help staff effectively to progress in their roles.

Case recording is poor. Children's records are not up to date or signed by staff.

Leaders and managers have not met the requirements from the previous inspection. This does not demonstrate that leaders and managers have made improvements in the home to improve the quality of care that children receive, and fails to ensure that children are safely cared for. Repeat requirements are therefore made.

Following the inspection, senior leaders made the decision to close the home. This is to provide an opportunity to review care practices, recruit a stable staff team and ensure that managers and staff attend relevant training sessions to understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children.

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>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)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(d))</p> <p>The manager needs to ensure that children's risk assessments are up-to-date and include all known risks with strategies included to reduce risk.</p>	14 September 2021

<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 work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that 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 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. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(f))</p> <p>This is particularly in relation to ensuring that a sufficient staff team is in place that can meet the needs of children. Furthermore, the provider needs to ensure that staff have the relevant training so they can meet children's individual needs.</p>	<p>14 September 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person must</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>14 September 2021</p>

<p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and</p> <p>the registered provider—</p> <p>is an organisation or a partnership;</p> <p>does not satisfy regulation 28; or</p> <p>is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27(1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))</p>	<p>14 September 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. (Regulation 33 (1)(a))</p>	<p>14 September 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>14 September 2021</p>
<p>he registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least 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> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, it's facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p>	<p>14 September 2021</p>

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report")

The registered person must—

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; and

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.
(Regulation 45(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))

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: 1240753

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: Tayub Ahmed

Registered manager: Neil Raby

Inspectors

Catherine Fargin, Social Care Inspector
Jessica Higginson, Social Care Inspector

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