

1216505

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 2 December 2019.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 August 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 widespread failures that mean children are not protected or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 28 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children have poor experiences living in this home. High levels of staff turnover and poor management oversight has negatively impacted on the quality of care that children receive.

Children do not have access to all parts of the home because staff routinely lock doors. In addition, some children are constantly supervised by staff which means that the children's privacy and freedom is significantly restricted. While some children need some additional support to ensure their safety, in one example, the provider failed to obtain the necessary authorisation from court to restrict a child's liberty.

Children's bedrooms are in a poor condition. For example, floors are dirty, and some items found were sharp and could pose a risk to children. Staff do not help the children to keep bedrooms clean or carry out regular checks to ensure they are safe. Living in these conditions has a detrimental impact on children's well-being and their safety.

Children do not have a structured daily routine. This has resulted in some children waking at 4pm and going to bed in the early hours of the morning. This impacts on their mealtimes and activities during the day, and how they settle in the evening. Staff create a plan for activities however they fail to ensure these are followed. Therefore, some children are not supported to pursue hobbies or interests. This impacts on the progress that children make.

Staff do not support children to have positive relationships with each other. Children do not spend time as a group, such as having fun together and socialising. Children's meetings do not take place. This is despite new children moving into the home.

Children have an allocated key worker and together they enjoy occasional activities, for example, trips to the cinema and the beach. However, key-work sessions are not planned and do not link to children's relevant plans. In addition, sessions are not consistently recorded on children's files. This means that the manager cannot be assured that children are receiving the right help and support that they need to make progress in their lives.

Before children move into the home, the manager carries out an assessment to consider the child's suitability and the potential impact on other children already living there. To help children prepare for moving into the home, the manager provides information and visits the child. This means children receive help to settle in.

When children move out of the home, staff effectively plan the child's transition. They provide children with off-site support to help them settle into their new environment. In addition, children and staff mark the occasion by doing something special together,

for example going to a restaurant. This means that children are prepared for the next steps in their lives and feel supported.

Staff support children to have family time including assistance with travel when families live some distance away. The manager advocates for children where appropriate, making suggestions to improve the quality of family time for children.

Children benefit from owning and caring for their pets, for example a rabbit or a millipede. This helps children to develop their sense of responsibility and they take pride in caring for their animal/insect.

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

Children's risk assessments are not up to date and some key information is missing. For example, the level of supervision that a child needs to keep them safe. In addition, the strategies to reduce children's individual risks are not consistently recorded in documents. This results in children experiencing inconsistent responses from staff and means that children's risks do not reduce. Poor management oversight has failed to address this shortfall despite it being raised in regulation 44 visits by the independent visitor.

There has been an increase in the incidents of children going missing. When incidents do happen, staff do not consistently follow children's plans. In one example, staff failed to contact police when a child was missing during the night. This poor practice was not addressed by the manager, which means that there is a risk of it occurring again. This may result in children being at risk.

The manager has failed to ensure that staff working in the home have relevant safe recruitment checks. Some staff do not have the correct background checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. In addition, the same staff were unsupervised when carrying out direct work with children. This places children at potential risk of harm.

Gaps in staffing levels undermine the consistency of care provided to children and places them at risk. The manager has failed to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of staff caring for children at all times. This is despite incidents of staff not being aware that children have left the home and are missing. This may result in children being at risk of significant harm.

Where there are concerns about staff behaviour, investigations are carried out and relevant agencies are informed. However, the manager does not consistently support the staff to learn from experiences. A failure to carry out lessons learned impacts on opportunities to improve care that children receive.

When children use drugs, staff offer children support from expert agencies. However, when children do not want to take part, staff do not persist. This results in children experiencing delays in receiving the help they need to reduce drug use.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There have been staff and management team shortages for over six months. This means that agency staff are regularly used, and at times, make up 50% of the staff team. In addition, the manager covers shifts on behalf of staff. The frequent staff changes have significantly affected the running of the home and in particular, the consistency of care to children.

Permanent staff receive regular supervision, and in most examples, a written record is completed. Staff have regular team meetings where the manager gives advice and guidance, and they talk about the children. Staff say they feel supported by the manager and describe her as approachable and caring.

Seven out of nine staff are not suitably qualified in a National Vocational Qualification to level 3 in working with children. Systems are in place to offer staff training, however the manager does not effectively monitor progress. The manager did not demonstrate good oversight of the staff training needs and their own progress. Some staff have not completed their induction training, and this has not been addressed by the manager.

The quality of information available to evaluate children's experiences of living in the home is poor. This is because the manager has failed to ensure that the staff's record-keeping is consistent and thorough. This has been made difficult by the high turnover of staff. This impacts on the quality of children's records and evaluating their experiences.

The manager does not use monitoring and reviewing systems effectively. This means that the themes and shortfalls in practice are not identified. This impacts on the manager's understanding of the children's progress and what needs to change to improve children's lives.

The manager has not ensured that Ofsted has an up-to-date statement of purpose. This has an impact on the independent scrutiny of the home and of the assurance that the home is working within the service offer and conditions.

The senior leadership team supports the manager and carry out audits to assess the quality of care that children receive. During the last audit, a significant number of shortfalls were identified. Even so, the responsible individual was not aware of some of the failures found during this inspection. The provider has considered the feedback seriously and expressed a commitment to address the failures identified.

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 staff—</p> <p>protect and promote each child’s welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <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;</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice;</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; and</p> <p>the conditions are—</p> <p>that the care meets the child’s needs;</p> <p>that the care is delivered by a person who—</p> <p>has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(iv)(ix)(c)(i)(ii) (3)(b)(c)(i))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>
<p>*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure 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>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.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b)(d))</p>	
<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—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	10 October 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>ensure that staff—</p> <p>have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p>	10 October 2021

<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) (c)(h))</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— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(d)(e)(f))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>
<p>Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b) (2))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>

<p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe.</p> <p>(Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</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>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>The registered person must take reasonable steps to ensure that any individual who is working at the home and who does not fall within paragraph (2)(a) and (b) is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d) (8))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the 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.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a) (3)(b)(c))</p>	<p>10 October 2021</p>

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 1216505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Registered provider address: Rickleton 1B, Bowes Offices, Lambton Park,
Chester Le Street DH3 4AN

Responsible individual: Christopher Goundry

Registered manager: Margaret Jameson

Inspector

Catherine Heron, Social Care Inspector

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