

1264438

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager was registered in August 2020.

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: 6 to 7 September 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 their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of last inspection: 10 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/10/2019	Full	Inadequate
07/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/08/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Some children experience poor and unsafe living conditions. There is a significant amount of repair work required in the communal areas of the home. The manager has a suitable action plan to address this shortfall. However, some children's bedrooms are unkempt and hazardous. There are issues that pose serious health and safety risks to children, which the manager has failed to identify or address. Staff do not take responsibility for the condition of children's bedrooms, therefore failing to support children to feel valued.

The manager assesses the suitability of admissions into the home. However, he admits children despite identifying risks to children that cannot be managed, because the home does not have relevant long-term or sustainable mitigating measures in place. This has contributed to children experiencing an unsettled period. One child said, 'I am not happy here.'

Children's care planning documents contain conflicting information. Staff demonstrated that they are not always familiar with the content of care plans and children sometimes experience inconsistent care.

Staff encourage children to attend routine health appointments and to access specialist health services when required. Staff help children to establish healthy routines, including the use of sensory lighting to help support a regular sleep pattern.

Not all children have educational placements. The manager works collaboratively with relevant professionals, escalating concerns so that children's educational needs can be understood. Some children are helped by staff to make educational progress through a programme of in-house training. One child has developed aspirations to attend an educational setting, and has an education placement secured. This is clear progress from their starting point.

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

Children are exposed to the risk of harm because leaders have failed to ensure that there are effective strategies in place to manage known risks to children. There is no effective system for recording the checks that staff are required to complete to help to keep one child safe. This demonstrates that risks are not sufficiently monitored.

Children's risk assessments do not always include guidance for staff to follow to help them understand how they can help to keep children safe. This exposes children to the potential risk of harm.

Staff keep some bathroom facilities locked, which denies children the ability to freely access these areas of the home. While each child has their own private bathroom, this segregation creates an institutional atmosphere for children, which fails to support their well-being.

Staff do not have sufficient training to help them to understand what they should do in the event of a fire breaking out in the home. Training records do not always include the type and level of training offered, or indicate when an update to the training is required. This limits the ability to track and monitor training.

Not all serious incidents have been notified to Ofsted. This means that Ofsted is unable to scrutinise information to ensure that children are safe. This leaves children vulnerable to the risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager has failed to rectify shortfalls in the quality of care provided, and has not understood the impact that these shortfalls have on children's experience and progress. The manager has not implemented a suitable action plan to address all the shortfalls raised.

Staff supervision takes place regularly, but the concerns that staff raise are not always followed up. There is little focus on the individual needs of children in the home. Furthermore, no staff have been appraised. These shortfalls demonstrate that there are insufficient actions in place to raise the standard of care that children receive.

The manager does not ensure that safer recruitment processes are followed when staff are appointed. For example, references are not always verified. This means that the adults working with children are not always suitably vetted. This exposes children to a potential risk of harm.

The manager has failed to implement effective monitoring systems to ensure that children's risk assessments contain the necessary actions that staff must take to promote the safety of the children. This failing exposes children to a potential risk of harm.

This inspection resulted in three compliance notices being issued under regulations 12, 13 and 32 to address serious concerns relating to: poor, unsafe care; widespread failings in the leadership and management of the home; and shortfalls in the recruitment process. Seven requirements have been issued to address other shortfalls raised.

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 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>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i))</p>	7 November 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> <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>	7 November 2021

<p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare;</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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(d))</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 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>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)(b)(c)(f)(h))</p>	<p>7 November 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>7 November 2021</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 each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</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 arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>ensure the effective induction of each child into the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i))</p> <p>This specifically relates to suitably matching placements.</p>	7 November 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</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. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	7 November 2021

<p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>7 November 2021</p>
<p>*The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that—</p> <p>(d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))</p>	<p>7 November 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</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)(b)(c))</p> <p>This includes the registered manager.</p>	<p>7 November 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,</p> <p>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>7 November 2021</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))	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home’s manager. (‘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: 1264438

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London W13 9HE

Responsible individual: Pradeep Manaktala

Registered manager: Adam Coffield

Inspector

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

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