

1234432

Registered provider: Lytham Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to two children who may have emotional and social difficulties or learning disabilities. A private company owns this home.

The registered manager left the home on 27 August 2021.

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 21 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 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/or widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 10 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

There are serious shortfalls in safeguarding practice and in the leadership and management of this home. Leaders, managers and staff do not respond adequately to incidents or carry out appropriate strategies to protect children living at the home. There is a lack of management oversight, with very limited strategies in place for staff to use to manage children's feelings and to reduce risks associated with these emotions. These shortfalls are compromising children's welfare and progress significantly.

Children have moved into the home when there has been an absence of a stable and consistent staff team. This has affected the staff's ability to manage the complex needs of the children. Leaders and managers have failed to carry out impact risk assessments before children move into the home. Therefore, these assessments do not carefully consider all risk factors for the children. Furthermore, the skills and the experience of the staff have not been considered to make sure that they can support the children safely.

Some children have left the home when they have been in crisis. Their move to their new home was not planned and did not minimise the disruption for the child.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are not been met effectively. Children are not supported to eat a variety of healthy and nutritious food. Staff do not have the understanding and the skills to support children's emotional well-being. Staff struggled to respond effectively when a child had suicidal thoughts and to help the child manage these feelings safely. Children are not supported to attend health appointments and, as a result, they do not have the help and the treatment that they require to meet their physical and psychological needs.

Children and staff do not live and work in a homely environment. The house is not decorated, furnished and maintained to a standard that meets the children's needs. A child said that she was asked about how she would like her room decorated before she moved in; however, this has still not been done after three months of living at the home. The sleeping accommodation for staff does not provide them with privacy or enable them to supervise children at night adequately.

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

Safeguarding practice in this home is not strong. Leaders, managers and staff do not promote the safety and the welfare of the children. Staff fail to take sufficient action to address safeguarding concerns. This includes when children go missing from home, return under the influence of substances and when they display self-injurious behaviours. The risks to some children of going missing from home and from criminal exploitation have increased significantly.

Concerns about children are not always dealt with effectively in line with the safeguarding guidance. This does not protect children from potential harm. When a child made an allegation about a member of staff, the manager failed to report this to the designated officer for the local authority or Ofsted. There is no record of what the manager did in response to the child's concerns.

Risk management strategies are reactive and inadequate. Despite concerns about a child tying a ligature around their neck, immediate action was not taken to minimise these risks. Staff identified that they require additional training to support children safely, but this has not been provided.

The risks posed by children's use of the internet have not been carefully considered by staff. One child was spending time alone in her bedroom and was gaming and talking to people online. There had been no consideration of the risk to the child from speaking to unknown people and no clear strategy to manage the risk.

Staff do not have the expertise needed to help children to manage their feelings and the impact of their experiences safely. When children are upset, staff struggle to support the child to talk about what is wrong, offer reassurance and find safe ways to deal with their emotions.

The strategies that staff use to help children understand about socially acceptable behaviour and to learn how to sort out problems are not effective. These include staff using the same sanction repeatedly to help a child to change their behaviour, despite it not working. Managers and staff do not reflect on the effectiveness of sanctions or have considered the use of different measures.

Children are not always cared for by people who have been suitably vetted. Leaders and managers do not ensure that all the information needed to assess a person's suitability to work with children has been gathered and checked. This includes not making sure that each person has completed a full application form; that written references are requested, obtained and verified; and that gaps in employment are carefully considered before the person starts working in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leadership and management arrangements in the home are poor and are ineffective. The registered manager left the home on 26 August 2021, and the responsible individual for the organisation left on 28 August 2021. No interim arrangements have been put in place to ensure that there is effective leadership and management oversight. The current directors do not have the skills or knowledge to provide staff with informed advice about managing risks and keeping children safe.

Children are not looked after by a settled and consistent staff team. Children are not always supported by people that they know well and who understand their needs. A child said that the number of different staff has made her feel 'unhappy and sad.'

On occasions, there has not been enough staff working at the home to meet children's needs safely. Additionally, in August 2021, at least twenty-six shifts were covered by agency workers. Sometimes, it was only agency staff working in the home.

Suitable checks have not been completed on agency workers to ensure that they have the skills and the experience to keep children safe and to provide a consistent level of care. New staff starting work at the home do not have a thorough induction to help them understand children's needs and the arrangements for each child's care.

Staff do not have up to date and accurate information about the child's assessed needs, experiences and risks. Children's files do not always include their most recent health assessment, personal education plan, school reports and the formal minutes of meetings about their care. Furthermore, information about children and the running of the home that was stored electronically by the manager is not available.

The staff rotas do not provide an accurate record of the names of the staff and the actual hours they work at the home.

Staff do not always have regular practice-related supervision as set out in the home's statement of purpose. This means that staff, including new and inexperienced people, do not have opportunities to reflect on children's progress, how they support the children and their own learning and development. Leaders and managers, therefore, are not evaluating staff's practice, learning and suitability to continue to work at the home.

Staff are not receiving the training that they require to understand how best to support the children and meet their needs and manage risk. Training in first aid and supporting children who may use self-injurious behaviours has not yet been provided for staff.

Leaders and managers' oversight of the welfare of children and the quality of care provided by the staff is weak. The internal and independent monitoring of the home does not provide an in-depth analysis of the experiences of children living at the home and the impact that the care is having on their lives. Monitoring does not identify shortfalls to ensure that there are continuous improvements.

Leaders and managers and the independent person do not routinely seek the views of children, their families, staff and the professionals involved to inform their assessment of children's safety and the effectiveness of the care that children receive. This shortfall was identified at the last inspection visit, but it has not been addressed.

Due to the significant safeguarding concerns, an emergency suspension notice was served 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 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>understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child’s welfare;</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>help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;</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)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(c)(i)(ii))</p>	<p>1 December 2021</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>1 December 2021</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;</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;</p> <p>take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child’s health and well-being needs; and</p> <p>understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being; and</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(c))</p>	
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p>	<p>1 December 2021</p>

<p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;</p> <p>are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;</p> <p>de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children.</p> <p>(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(ix)(x)(xi))</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 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 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>1 December 2021</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; 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; and</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (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>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>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 experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p>	<p>1 December 2021</p>

<p>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</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)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))</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 that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>that there are arrangements in place to—</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; and</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii)(c))</p>	<p>1 December 2021</p>
<p>An organisation may only carry on a home if—</p> <p>each director of the organisation, except for a director who is the responsible individual, who is involved in the carrying on of a home by that organisation satisfies the requirements in paragraph (6); and</p> <p>the organisation has notified HMCI of the name, address and position in the organisation of the responsible individual.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p>	<p>1 December 2021</p>

<p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</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 individual is mentally and physically fit to carry on the home; and</p> <p>the individual is financially fit to carry on the home.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of the matters in paragraphs 1 and 3 to 6 of Schedule 2.</p> <p>A responsible individual must—</p> <p>satisfy the requirements in paragraph (5)(a) to (c); and</p> <p>have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (4)(i)(ii) (5)(a)(b)(c)(d) (6)(a)(b) (7)(a)(b))</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,</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> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p>	<p>1 December 2021</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.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)(a)(b))</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>	1 December 2021
<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>Case records must be kept—</p> <p>if the child dies before attaining the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of the child’s death;</p> <p>in cases not falling within sub-paragraph (a), for 75 years from the child’s date of birth;</p>	1 December 2021

<p>securely in the children’s home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there; and</p> <p>in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date; and</p> <p>retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>This includes keeping accurate records of the actual hours worked by staff and managers.</p>	1 December 2021
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>	1 December 2021
<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>	1 December 2021

(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b))	
<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, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>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 (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection visit and has been issued again.</p>	1 December 2021

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: 1234432

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lytham Care Limited

Registered provider address: 400 Longmoor Lane, Fazakerly, Liverpool L9 9DB

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Nick Veysey, Social Care Inspector

Michelle Edge, Social Care Inspector

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