

SC425985

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It provides care for up to seven children with learning disabilities.

The registered manager has left the organisation. A new manager has been appointed, who is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 October 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

The home was judged to be inadequate at the full inspection on 18 and 19 May 2021. Three compliance notices were issued in relation to regulation 12 (the protection of children standard), regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) and regulation 14 (the care planning standard). A monitoring visit took

place on 6 July 2021 and two compliance notices in relation to regulations 12 and 13 were reissued. A second monitoring visit took place 26 August 2021, and the notices were met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/05/2021	Full	Inadequate
30/05/2019	Full	Good
05/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have a good understanding of each child's diverse and unique needs. Staff take the time to build positive relationships with children so that they feel safe and secure in their care. As a result, children are happy and enjoy spending time with staff.

Two children have recently moved into the home from another home within the organisation. The moves were successful because they were carefully and sensitively planned by the staff to cause the least amount of disruption to the children.

Staff created individual books to help children understand what was taking place and why they were moving. Staff made sure that their bedrooms were decorated in their favourite colours and that the children and parents were consulted on all aspects of the move.

Parents are pleased with the care provided to children. One parent said that they wished that the staff could go with their child when they moved to adult services.

Care planning is improving. New documentation is being introduced to streamline this process. Children's emotional health and well-being are supported well. Staff take the time to talk to children and reassure them when they have medical appointments.

Staff advocate well on behalf of the children. For example, they ensure that they gain the right permissions for children to receive their COVID-19 booster vaccinations.

Children enjoy a wide range of self-chosen activities. Some children are trying new things, such as trampoline parks. One child enjoyed it so much that they chose to go again. Other children enjoy going shopping with staff or simply going for a drive in the car.

Staff ensure that the children spend as much time as possible with their families. Staff make sure that families are well supported so that they enjoy their time with their child.

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

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection and safeguarding practices. They are confident to report any concerns to the appropriate professionals and to escalate a concern if they feel that it is not being taken seriously.

Staff are aware that some children struggle with their anxieties and emotions and recognise the importance of routines for the children. Daily routines are created

to help children to feel safe and secure but also to try new things. This helps to build children's confidence and self-esteem.

There have been two occasions where police were called for assistance, which were prior to the new manager's arrival. The records of these incidents do not tell the full story of the events or the actions taken by staff. Similarly, the physical interventions records do not contain all the necessary information. As a result, a new format is to be used to record significant incidents and physical interventions to capture the pertinent information.

Children's bedrooms are designed and furnished to reflect their individual personalities and interests. Staff are striving to make the home a warm and welcoming environment for the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Following the last inspection, the registered manager left the organisation and an interim manager was in post for a short period. A new manager took over on 9 September 2021. She is an experienced manager and is working well with the new management team and staff to bring about the necessary changes.

It is fair to say that this has been an unsettling time for staff. There has been the closure of the sister home and the amalgamation of two staff teams, as well as children leaving and new children moving into the home.

However, throughout this period, children have remained at the heart of everything that the manager and staff did. The staff worked shadow shifts so that they could get to know the children and their new colleagues. This helped the children to feel safe and settled in their new home.

Staff are complimentary about the management and the changes that have been made. They say that they are now included in making decisions about the home and the children, and that they are empowered to ask questions and put forward their views.

Most staff have regular supervision and annual appraisals. However, this has not been the case for all staff. This was identified by the manager and she is taking steps to rectify this.

Monitoring by former managers has not been robust. Consequently, some records have not had management oversight, others contain inaccurate information and have not been signed by the relevant people. The former manager's six-monthly report of the home does not provide an analysis of what the home does well and the areas for improvement.

The new manager has a clear plan in place and has made several changes to improve record-keeping and ensure that managerial tasks, such as fire drills, are carried out on a regular basis. In addition, she is changing the decor in some

communal rooms and staff bedrooms and is changing the use of some rooms and improving record-keeping. She has the support of the responsible individual to make the necessary changes in the home.

Professionals and parents are complimentary about the service and the positive impact this has on the children's confidence, self-esteem, independence and communication.

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 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>	17 December 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p>	17 December 2021

<p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once 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, 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>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"). (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3))</p>	<p>17 December 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all records are signed by the relevant people and reflect the correct home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that information is recorded in a way that is helpful to the child and which tells the story of the child's time in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC425985

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Registered provider address: Sefton House, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4XR

Responsible individual: Katharine Silver

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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