

1226397

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It provides care for up to four children aged six to 17 years. The children may have faced adverse childhood experiences, trauma or placement and family breakdown.

The manager in the home had applied to register with Ofsted but has very recently resigned from the home. The responsible individual is in day-to-day charge of the home.

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.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 October 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 and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 26 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/05/2019	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's experiences and progress have been significantly affected by shortfalls in how children are helped and protected and in leadership and management. Following this inspection, two compliance notices have been issued under regulation 12 and regulation 13.

Staff do not consistently promote all children's contact with their families. Staff also do not always ensure that children can talk to their families at arranged times. This leaves children confused and upset.

Children have positive relationships with core members of staff. However, inconsistent staffing and managers joining and leaving the home over the last year, have meant children have not been able to expect consistent care. This does not help children to feel settled and make the best progress they can.

All children attend school and are making progress in education. One child has progressed from part-time to full-time attendance over the summer term. They are now engaging well in lessons. However, for another child, staff do not fully promote their education. For example, communication with their school is poor, and staff have consistently failed to get the child to school on time over a prolonged period. In addition, staff did not book to attend parents evening or purchase their school photo until the headteacher directly raised this with the responsible individual. This shows the lack of effective communication systems in the home and does not emphasise to children that staff believe in the importance of their education. Staff also do not support educational activities, such as reading with children. As such, while children are making progress, this is limited by the lack of staff support with education.

Children know how to complain if they are unhappy. Managers address children's complaints effectively. Children appreciate the staff efforts to make sure they know their rights.

Children have access to specialist help and therapy support. Progress is seen for children who have consistent support from staff to access this help. The responsible individual is a positive advocate for children with external partners. She has raised concerns about how the home can meet the needs of one child. This has resulted in the child moving to a specialist placement that is better suited to meet their needs.

Children have regular sessions with their key workers. Staff address areas such as bullying, what to do if children feel unsafe and if they go missing-from-home.. It is clear that children have regular discussions about issues that are important to them, and these have a largely positive impact.

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

Managers do not ensure that staff manage risk effectively. This significant failure puts children at risk of harm. Staff do not always follow guidance that is in place to protect children from harm. For example, one child was able to harm themselves as staff did not provide the required care and support to them. In another example, children's welfare and safety were compromised due to lack of supervision, which resulted in a serious incident and a negative impact on children's experiences.

Staff do not always consider the physical environment in relation to ensuring children's safety. In particular, staff have not assessed potential hazards within the home that may pose a risk to children who self-harm. The lack of assessment and understanding of risk has left children at risk of harm.

Staff do not always respond as they should do when children raise concerns about each other. For example, staff took no action when one child shared a serious concern about another child. Managers were unaware of this concern until told by inspectors. This indicates that the staff practice and management oversight fell short, and children were left at risk.

Managers liaise with the statutory agencies when children make allegations about staff. They also follow guidance given and complete internal investigations as needed. However, due to the inconsistency of management in the home, oversight of concerns about individual members of staff is poor. This failure has caused significant delay in formally addressing concerns about poor care and practice.

Staff physically intervene with children when needed. This is proportionate and in their best interest. After incidents, children and staff have the opportunity to reflect on what happened. However, it is not clear that staff and managers act in a timely way, nor who leads the discussions with staff to explore and challenge practice as needed. This limits the learning from incidents.

On one occasion a member of staff did not follow the provider's medication procedure. As a result, staff overdosed a child with their controlled medication. The provider completed an investigation into this incident and addressed the member of staff's poor practice. There have been no medication errors for almost a year.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Management of the home has been inconsistent for over a year. There has been no registered manager since August 2020. While there have been periods of stability, this has not helped the home to become settled. The lack of consistent management has meant that the development of practice and oversight have been poor.

Management monitoring of the home is not effective. Inspectors found errors in children's important records and in physical intervention reports. In addition, disclosures made by children are not always acted on, and risk assessments do not address wider risks to children. This lack of oversight means that staff are not held to account for their practice sufficiently.

The provider has implemented support systems for staff. These include individual supervisions and regular team meetings. These are increasingly used to ensure staff develop and are held to account. However, as noted previously, concerns are not always addressed quickly. This means that staff practice does not improve at the pace it should to promote children's welfare.

Leaders and managers do not notify Ofsted clearly when there are serious incidents. The lack of detail reduces the regulators oversight of the home. This weakens the safety net for children.

Staff receive training that is relevant to their role. Managers can access the central system to monitor staff completion, to help them oversee the home. However, not all staff have the required qualification for their role. Consequently, the staff supporting children do not have the necessary training to provide the care children need.

Professionals report mixed experiences of the home, and some have lost faith in the care that children receive. Several reported that communication with the home is poor and has been for many months. In contrast, all partners had confidence in the new responsible individual who has taken day-to-day charge of the home. Staff welcome the increased rigour and support. However, this has not yet become embedded into the home to ensure safe working practice.

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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (d))</p> <p>In particular, managers and staff must build relationships with other professionals which promote trust in the care of children. This relates in particular, but not exclusively, to social workers and school.</p>	2 December 2021
<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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i))</p> <p>In particular, where there are general or specific environmental risks for children, these should be addressed.</p>	21 November 2021

<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(x))</p> <p>In particular, managers must ensure that children arrive at school on time. Staff should also support children with homework and reading as appropriate.</p>	<p>21 November 2021</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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, managers must ensure that risks are fully considered to ensure that staff have sufficient guidance to support children. Manager must also ensure that staff are fully aware of the guidance and can use this in day-to-day practice.</p>	<p>21 November 2021</p>
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	<p>21 November 2021</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii))</p> <p>In particular staff must adhere to the provider’s safeguarding policy, including when children make allegations or disclosures about each other.</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>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, managers and supervisors must address concerns about practice as they arise and put in place clear actions with timescales for improvement.</p>	<p>21 November 2021</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>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p>	<p>21 November 2021</p>

<p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d)(e))</p> <p>In particular, the provider must ensure there are sufficient, permanent staff to consistently care for the number of children living in the home.</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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure there is a clear system for monitoring the home. This must include managers ensuring paperwork in the home is accurate. In addition, managers must ensure that they are monitoring the time that children arrive at school to ensure they can make the best of their time in school.</p>	<p>21 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>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>In particular staff must adhere to children's plans, including ensuring that contact arrangements for children are met.</p>	<p>21 November 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. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))</p>	<p>2 December 2021</p>
<p>The requirements are that —</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</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").</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (3)(b) (4)(a) (5)(a))</p>	<p>2 December 2021</p>
<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>a description of the measure and its duration;</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>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)(iv) (b)(i) (c))</p> <p>In particular, staff must accurately describe any physical interventions that they use. In addition, the provider must be</p>	<p>21 November 2021</p>

able to evidence that children and staff involved in these incidents are spoken to within the required timescale, and who is involved in these conversations. Managers must also make it clear who leads the conversations with staff to ensure objective challenge to practice.	
<p>A notification made under this regulation—</p> <p>must include details of—</p> <p>the matter;</p> <p>the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified;</p> <p>and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter. (Regulation 40 (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure that notifications have sufficient detail for the regulator to understand what has happened and the actions taken by the provider.</p>	21 November 2021

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to 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: 1226397

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Mountfields House, Epinal Way, Off Squirrel Way,
Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3GE

Responsible individual: Melissa Mathews

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Karol Keenan, Social Care Inspector
Mazviita Makiyi, Social Care Inspector

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