

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 is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

There are two children currently living in the home. The inspectors spoke to the children during this inspection.

There is currently no registered manager.

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: 7 and 8 December 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: 6 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 6 and 7 September 2021, a full inspection was carried out. The inspector found significant health and safety issues in the home and widespread failings with the leadership and management of the home, including poor and unsafe recruitment

practice. Ofsted issued compliance notices under regulations 12, 13 and 32 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 to address these serious failings.

A monitoring visit was carried out on 14 October 2021 to review the progress made by the provider to meet the three compliance notices. The inspector found that the provider had taken sufficient steps to meet the three compliance notices. However, the changes made were recent and not embedded in staff practice. The previously issued requirements were not considered at the monitoring visit, and for this reason they were reissued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2021	Full	Inadequate
10/12/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/10/2019	Full	Inadequate
07/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have good relationships with their caring adults. Children identify staff as people who they can trust and as people who listen to them. Staff demonstrate that they know the children well and that they are responsive to the children's needs.

The home is being refurbished and is near completion. The condition of the home is greatly improved. Children are consulted regarding developments to the home, which helps the children to understand that their contribution is valued.

Managers ensure that health and safety checks are completed routinely and that any issues are promptly identified and addressed. This helps to ensure that the children live in a home that is safe and free from hazards. Sometimes, the health and safety checks include institutional practice. This detracts from the otherwise homely environment.

Children are encouraged by the staff to value their education. Staff provide the children with training courses to help the children to learn either in addition to their formal education or while an education placement is sourced. One education professional said, 'Staff are committed and proactive in ensuring education needs are met.'

Staff support the children to attend routine medical appointments and specialist appointments for more complex health needs. Staff help the children to understand the risks associated with COVID-19 and to incorporate routine measures each day. This helps to reduce the risk of the children contracting the virus.

Staff seek children's views and use the children's input to individualise their care planning, including when children transition out of the home. Staff help children to prepare for the changes and to feel well equipped for their future.

Children enjoy a range of activities and trips with staff, which are opportunities to have fun and to make positive memories. Staff support the children to take part in events to raise funds for charity. This helps the children to contribute to their community.

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

There is a significant reduction of incidents in which children go missing from the home. On the rare occasion this does occur, staff attempt to locate children, which helps the children to understand that their safety is a priority.

When safeguarding concerns arise, the interim manager swiftly puts measures in place to protect the children. She shares concerns with the appropriate safeguarding agencies without delay so that there is a prompt, multi-agency approach to safeguarding the children.

Risk assessments and care plans are linked and updated when children's needs change or when new risks emerge. This guidance helps the staff to understand how to keep each child safe.

The location risk assessment is regularly updated so that it includes current information. This helps staff to understand how to keep children safe in the community. The eradication of a specific risk in the community is significant progress for one child and demonstrates that staff help children to become safer.

Staff support children to learn about potential dangers, including the risks that they may face online. This helps children to become aware of risks and to develop skills to be able to keep themselves safe.

Staff provide children with regular key-work sessions. This helps the staff to keep children informed and allows them to support the children with their specific areas of need.

Staff use regular children's meetings to gain children's views and to involve the children in their care. Staff hold topical discussions to help the children to develop an awareness of the wider world.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The interim manager, who is the former deputy of the home, is in the process of applying to be registered with Ofsted. She is supported by senior managers who have implemented a bespoke managerial induction. This helps her to understand the responsibilities and the expectations of the registered manager role.

Safer recruitment processes are followed when staff are appointed, which provides assurances that the adults have been appropriately vetted before they care for the children.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision. Team meetings are held regularly and are well attended. These are used to help staff to understand children's current needs. Managers share updated policies and procedures with the staff and provide current research to help staff to keep their practice updated.

The interim manager has been appraised and she has begun to appraise staff. However, several staff have not been appraised. This means that there is not sufficient focus on this aspect of the staff's development.

A senior manager has completed a quality-of-care review report; however, this does not include an action plan. This means that this process is not fully utilised to drive improvement forward.

The interim manager has developed a tool to help her to monitor the staff's training. This helps her to ensure that mandatory training and other relevant training are up to date. This enables the staff to meet the children's individual needs.

Managers have devised and implemented effective systems to scrutinise the care that children receive. The managers appropriately challenge staff when necessary. Staff demonstrate that they recognise the value of having their practice scrutinised by the managers and that they embrace systems to improve the care that the children receive.

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	9 January 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children’s homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children; they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than ‘institutional’ impression. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should complete a quality review report every six months. The review should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: 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: Post vacant

Inspectors

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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