

1234317

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private company and offers short- to medium-term placements for up to six children aged from 11 to 17 years. The children may have experienced trauma and exploitation, and may also have emotional and/or social difficulties.

Two managers have been appointed and have left the home since the last full inspection.

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 date: 6 January 2022

Date of last inspection: 25 May 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

There have been five admissions since the last inspection. Two of the five children have moved on from the home as their needs could not be met safely, which led to notice being served by the manager and the responsible individual. One child had the offer of placement revoked before they arrived.

Three out of the four children living at the home at present are engaging with their care plans. These children speak positively about the staff and the care that they receive. They feel safe and can identify the staff they could speak to if they had any worries. The fourth child has been missing from home for a number of days. Staff have worked in partnership to safeguard him and have agreed a plan to collect him when located.

All the children at the home now have education plans which are underpinned by personal education plans and education and/or healthcare plans. Children were seen engaging in education during the inspection with a home tutor. Professionals spoken to confirmed that the children are engaging in education which meets their educational developmental needs and that staff are supporting their education within the home.

The home environment has much improved. The children are supported in personalising their bedrooms, which makes them feel valued. However, there are areas where the home could be improved to ensure that the children experience a safe and homely environment. For example, the games room is not fully set up and children have excessive belongings on the floor in their bedrooms.

Staff have supported children in registering with universal services. As a result, children's health needs are now being met and there is now effective partnership working with key professionals and families.

Progress for children at the home is variable. For some children, progress has not been made in relation to their needs being met. This has led to bullying, allegations against staff and assaults on staff. There is not always a consistent approach from staff to behaviour management. This, along with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to the children not feeling that their care needs have been consistently met.

Allegations against staff have been managed effectively by the operational manager and responsible individual. Staff are subject to investigations to ensure that children are safe.

Some children are developing their independent living skills and are accessing vocational education. However, their progress in developing independent skills has not always been tracked and monitored. This means that children's progression records are not reflected in their care and pathway plans accurately, and children do not have evidence on file of their achievements.

Staff are motivated to engage the children in positive routines and activities to support their development. As a result, some children have benefited from forming positive relationships with the staff.

The home has not had a registered manager for over a year, which has impacted on the progress of the home's action plan from the last inspection. There have been some improvements implemented by the operational manager and the responsible individual; however, they are still developing effective oversight of the home.

Evidence of team meetings, supervision and training was not shared. This does not assure the regulator that staff practice is sufficient to meet the needs of the children.

The operational manager and responsible individual are aware of the shortfalls and areas for improvement. They have recently appointed a new manager and new staff for the home, and they have improved the induction and training which staff will receive.

Since the last inspection, not all the requirements have been met. These relate to six-monthly reviews of the quality of care; the location risk assessment; the home's statement of purpose; and providing staff with regular supervision. This has impacted on the outcomes for children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/02/2020	Full	Inadequate
03/05/2018	Full	Good
24/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</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>help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(v)(vi))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure that the intended service provided to children enhances their prospects when they move on from the home, in line with the home's statement of purpose.</p>	28 February 2022
<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>	28 February 2022

<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 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. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that the children are regularly consulted and that their views, opinions and any action taken to improve the quality of care at the home are included in the quality of care review.</p>	
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that, as part of the location assessment, the local community and surrounding areas of the home are assessed to help to evaluate the location of the property and level of risk for children.</p>	28 February 2022
<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>	28 February 2022

(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	
<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 work as a team where appropriate;</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>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of the 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.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(f)(g)(h))</p>	<p>28 February 2022</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. Children’s homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. This particularly refers to the manager ensuring that the outside of the property is maintained to a high standard, including the rear porch, to enhance the living experience of the children. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of the information from internal monitoring, under regulation 45, to ensure continuous improvement. In particular, the registered manager must ensure that they gather the views of parents, social workers, health and education professionals and any other people who are significant in the children's

lives. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33 (4)(b). This particularly refers to the manager ensuring that all staff are supervised in line with the supervision policy. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Lisa Baxter

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Noel Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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