

1240884

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Holdco Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The provider states in the home's statement of purpose that they provide care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties.

A manager is in place but is not yet registered 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.

We last visited this setting on 2 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 January 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2019	Full	Good
02/05/2018	Full	Good
08/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
02/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of the inspection, two children lived at the home. One child had only been at the home for three days. Since the last inspection, three children have left. Records show that outcomes for children who have left are varied.

The children living in the home were spoken to and were involved in the inspection. One child described the core staff team as 'my family' and said that he was 'happy' and liked the adults caring for him. However, the child also spoke about the changes in staffing at the home and how this had increased his anxieties.

Education is promoted well in the home. Staff encourage and support education in line with children's plans. One child spoke positively about their education, learning and aspirations for their future. However, staff are not aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs or disabilities. This is a missed opportunity to access a range of specialist resources for children with additional needs.

Children's health needs are not being consistently met. Children are registered with health professionals and staff arrange routine medical appointments. However, when children have suffered an injury, action is not taken to ensure that children receive appropriate medical advice. Serious injuries have not been managed in a timely way and information about action taken is inaccurate, for example, details of when medical attention has been received. The manager accepted this shortfall and immediately sought medical attention for a child during the inspection.

Plans for children moving into the home do not always carefully consider each child's needs. This led to a child having to move out of the home quickly and in an unplanned way. Some children's moves from the home have not been a positive experience.

The staff encourage and support the children to keep in touch with their families and friends. The staff take time to make sure that children visit their family home and ensure that support is available to children from a distance. This helps them to maintain their identity and feel connected to home.

Children live in a warm, clean home and children's bedrooms are personalised. However, parts of the home have damage to the walls and paintwork is peeling off. Repairs were arranged by the manager during the inspection. Also, there are locks on doors to the communal living room, as this is used as a staff sleep-in space. This means that children do not have access to all shared areas of their home. On occasions, a child has decided to use the staff sleep-in area as their bedroom. This has led to confusion and disruption at bedtime.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Some staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children. Despite individualised risk assessments being in place that include clear strategies on how to minimise risks, these are not consistently used in practice. Furthermore, staff are not clear on how to record sufficient information to demonstrate how incidents have been safely managed. This had led to confusion about a child's welfare.

Some staff lack an understanding of the risks that information on social media can present to children, and of their role in acting as a good parent. Staff rely on parental controls to ensure that children do not access unsuitable websites using the home's internet. However, there is limited monitoring of what children access if they are using independently purchased data, for example on mobile phones. This does not keep children safe from online grooming or inappropriate internet content.

Recruitment checks to test the suitability of staff are not adequate. Information has not been clearly triangulated and unexplained gaps in employment are not thoroughly explored. The interim manager has not ensured that satisfactory information is readily available to ensure that adults are appropriately checked and considered suitable to work in the home.

Staff use a restorative approach towards behaviour management. There has been one occasion when physical restraint was necessary. This was proportionate and took place in line with policies and procedures. Children thrive in an environment of mutual respect.

There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home during this inspection period. There is a clear missing-from-home protocol in place for staff to follow. Staff demonstrate that they know what to do if children were to go missing from the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is led by an interim manager, who has submitted an application to register with Ofsted. He was previously a senior residential care worker at the home. He has taken time to review care records and practices in the home. He has gradually started to make changes to practices and shared the learning with the staff team.

The manager is child-centred and spoke with warmth about the children he is responsible for. Feedback from a child was very positive about the manager and the changes he has made.

The manager has supported the staff team to meet the needs of children flexibly during the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. This included covering

shifts to ensure that the child living in the home at that time received support from staff who knew him well.

Staff undertake all the necessary training to meet the needs of the children. The manager has a detailed system in place to ensure that all staff attend training and receive development to support them in their roles. Furthermore, all staff receive regular supervision and performance appraisals. Most of the staff have the qualification required by regulations.

Partnership working with parents, carers and professionals is a strength. An independent reviewing officer said: 'We cannot fault the service that [name of child] receives. Staff have formed positive relationships with him, and for the last two review meetings [the child] has attended the entirety of his meeting. He has made significant progress over the last six months, and this is a credit to the home.'

The manager accepted the shortfalls identified at the inspection and took immediate action to rectify concerns.

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 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>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 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)(c))</p> <p>This relates to ensuring that all children receive appropriate medical treatment following serious incidents.</p>	11 March 2022
<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>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>	11 March 2022

<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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>This relates to ensuring that all staff have the skills and knowledge to be able to implement strategies contained in risk assessments to safeguard children.</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;</p> <p>and 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>This relates to ensuring that staff teams working on shift together have the adequate skills, knowledge and experience to safely care for the children.</p>	11 March 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))</p>	11 March 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p>	11 March 2022

<p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p> <p>This relates to children being able to access all areas of their home. Communal areas must not be locked and should not be used as sleeping spaces.</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;</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))</p> <p>This relates to inconsistencies in staff recruitment information. Information has not been consistently explored and clarified.</p>	<p>11 March 2022</p>

Recommendation

- The registered person should make sure that managers and staff are aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special education needs or disabilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)

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: 1240884

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Holdco Limited

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

Responsible individual: Lisa Baxter

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Social Care Regulatory Inspection Manager
Rose Maddocks, Social Care Inspector

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