

1216505

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to five children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

There is currently no registered manager at this home.

Inspection date: 14 February 2022

This monitoring visit

This visit was carried out to investigate potential breaches of regulations. It was in response to information that was shared with Ofsted that indicated a potential risk of harm to children.

The visit included a review of the children's documents, observations of the children and discussions with the staff and the responsible individual.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the visit. The inspectors observed both children and spoke to them during this inspection.

The inspectors identified serious and widespread failures that affect the protection of children.

Children have not experienced consistent care that enables them to be kept safe and make progress. The entire staff team, including the proposed registered manager, left in the same week. Agency staff and staff from the sister home have provided cover. However, this has been extremely disruptive for the children and has left them feeling uncomfortable in their home. One child said that they did not know the names or anything about the people who were caring for them.

The provider has failed to ensure that there are sufficient staff to cover shifts, both during the day and night. During the past two months, there have been numerous examples of staff working excessive hours. For example, some have worked three days and nights without rest. In addition, staff have worked on shift alone, and other staff have been asleep during the night when they should have been on a waking night shift. This is unsafe practice.

The provider has failed to ensure that the staff records are maintained correctly; the staff rota is not accurate. Staff who have worked in the home are not named on the rota. Some rotas are not dated and others have been amended, which makes these records illegible. This poor practice prevents Ofsted from having a clear understanding of who has provided care for the children on any given day. This does not promote good safeguarding practice.

There is a culture of poor management of allegations and complaints. Allegations made by the children against the staff are not correctly recorded or investigated. When children express concerns about the staff's behaviour, the provider fails to complete a written record, support the child appropriately or carry out a thorough and transparent investigation. In one example, staff dismissed the child's concerns and defended their colleagues.

The provider has failed to respond appropriately to whistle-blowing complaints. When staff raise complaints or concerns about the behaviour of other staff, the provider fails to act appropriately or carry out thorough investigations. This practice affects the children's safety.

The provider has failed to ensure that staff follow the home's record-keeping policy. Therefore, documents are not completed and information is missing from the children's files. In addition, staff do not consistently check the suitability of adults who visit the home. This lack of scrutiny means that the provider cannot be assured that only those people who should be in the home are safe and suitable to be there.

When serious incidents involving the children occur, the provider fails to consistently inform Ofsted. This includes when police attend the home or when there are concerns regarding the exploitation of children. This practice prevents the regulator from having an overview of the actions taken by staff in the home.

The provider has positive working relationships with the children's placing local authorities. They have routinely consulted with them to plan for the children's move in readiness for the home's closure. However, when an external agency has not provided a child with a service, the provider has failed to advocate on the child's behalf. This has resulted in the child experiencing unnecessary delays in accessing a service that they need.

The provider has made the decision to temporarily close the home and there are plans for the children to move out of the home. One social worker described the

service to a child as 'disappointing' and that the child has been 'let down' by the provider.

Following this visit, one compliance notice was issued under regulation 13. This was issued to improve the leadership and management arrangements of the home to ensure that the children are safe and protected.

The previously issued requirements under regulations 6, elements of regulation 13 and the recommendations were not fully reviewed during this visit. For this reason, they are reissued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/10/2021	Full	Good
17/08/2021	Full	Inadequate
28/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))</p>	8 May 2022
<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 staff—</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(iv)(ix))</p>	8 May 2022
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	8 May 2022

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b))</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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(d)(e))</p>	<p>8 May 2022</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>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))</p>	<p>8 May 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p>	<p>8 May 2022</p>

<p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a))</p>	8 May 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that no child is subject to any reprisal for making a complaint or representation. (Regulation 39 (3) (4))</p>	8 May 2022
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(e))</p>	8 May 2022

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. Children’s homes must comply with the relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.). Rooms and outside areas need to be decorated and maintained to ensure that the home remains warm and welcoming and not institutionalised. (‘Guide to

the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- 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. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1216505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Registered provider address: Rickleton 1B, Bowes Offices, Lambton Park,
Chester Le Street DH3 4AN

Responsible individual: Christopher Goundry

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Catherine Heron, Social Care Inspector

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector

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