

# SC403789

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home offers care for up to four children who may have a combination of mental health, psychological, emotional and complex care needs.

The registered manager is on long-term leave. An interim manager was in post but has recently left. Senior managers are in the process of recruiting a new interim manager to cover until the registered manager returns to work.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that an allegation was being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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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	inadequate
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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:** 8 September 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/09/2021	Full	Good
12/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/09/2019	Full	Good
13/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

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

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. Two children have moved on from the home since the last inspection and one child has moved in. Staff visited the child before they moved in and staff supported a child to move on to their new home. One child moved on sooner than anticipated. Records relating to transitions into and on from the home are unclear and this is a missed opportunity to fully evidence some of the good care that children receive.

Most aspects of children's health are met well by staff. For example, children have their annual health assessments and attend routine appointments. Health needs are kept under review and children make some progress with their physical and emotional health. In addition, a child has access to specialist support with regard to a particular health concern. However, staff have not received training to help them to understand and respond to this specific need.

Medication management is not robust because staff do not keep good records when they administer medicines to children. Despite having systems in place to audit medication, these are not implemented well by staff and overseen by managers. Furthermore, staff do not ensure that some medications are stored at the appropriate temperature. These shortfalls have the potential to compromise children's health.

The home does not provide a warm, welcoming or cosy environment where children can unwind and feel relaxed. The inspector observed that some door handles were broken, living room and hallway carpets were stained and some children's bedrooms were untidy and one required cleaning. Children have not been given the opportunity to personalise their bedrooms, one child does not have enough storage space and their bedroom door does not close fully to give her the privacy she would like. These shortfalls do not enable the children to invest in their home and feel valued. A recommendation raised at the last inspection about the home environment has not been addressed.

Children have made some good progress with their education from their starting points. For example, most children now attend school more regularly. Staff advocate for children when there are concerns about the suitability of school placements. However, children do not receive consistently good support. For example, one child does not have structure during the school day while waiting to start an education placement. In addition, staff and managers are not fully aware of children's academic progress and one child's personal education plan is missing.

Staff undertake regular key-work sessions with children and there are further opportunities for children to express their wishes and feelings at children's meetings.

As a result, children contribute to their daily care and to some aspects of the running of the home.

Children enjoy various leisure activities, such as going out for meals, cycling, arts and crafts, playing card games, shopping and day trips out to funfairs. Staff support children to spend quality time with close friends and family. Children are developing hobbies and interests as well as building their social skills, self-esteem and social networks.

Staff and the managers encourage the children to do chores around the home, such as cooking and doing laundry. They also help children to spend time in the community safely, in line with their needs and development. This is promoting children's independence and life skills.

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

The quality of children's risk assessments is generally good. However, staff do not follow all the guidance set out in these documents. For example, staff do not store cables from games consoles safely when not in use to militate against the risk of children self-harming. While this has not compromised children's safety to date, it has the potential to do so.

Senior managers lack professional curiosity to explore gaps in staff's employment histories. As a result, recruitment practice is not consistently good and this increases the risk of unsuitable people being employed to care for children.

Managers have recently reviewed the locality risk assessment. However, they did not consult partner agencies in compiling this assessment to ensure that it contains information about all current risks in the local area. This does not show good partnership working to help inform staff and children about potential risks that children may face when they are out in their local community and how these risks can be mitigated and managed.

A fire risk assessment has been completed within the last year. No outstanding actions were raised at this review. However, during the inspection three fire doors were observed not to close properly. This indicates that as part of routine checks, managers and staff are not identifying issues that may compromise fire safety. This shortfall was rectified during the inspection.

Children enjoy positive relationships with staff. This is a strength of the service and has helped children to develop trusting relationships with staff, whom they can talk to about any worries or concerns.

Staff have undertaken some good work with children to help them to understand the risks related to county lines, child sexual exploitation, going missing from home and the potential implications of offending behaviour. As a result of good work with children, their risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing from care and verbal

and physical aggression, have reduced. Children recognise that they have made progress with managing their emotions and behaviour. Consequently, children have a better understanding of themselves and risk and they are empowered and equipped to keep themselves safe.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The registered manager is currently on long-term leave and interim management arrangements have been poor. Senior managers have taken action to address this. However, as a result of ineffective management and oversight, there has been a decline in the previously good standards of care provided to children.

A deputy manager has recently returned to work to support the management arrangements, together with the responsible individual. The registered provider is in the process of recruiting a new interim manager.

Because of the shortfalls in management arrangements, staff have not received regular supervision and they have not had an annual appraisal of their performance. In addition, while staff have undertaken mandatory training, they have not had the breadth of training that would enable them to fully understand and meet some of the children's needs. These are missed opportunities to promote staff's development and equip them with all the skills and knowledge that they need to care for children consistently well.

Staff and the manager do not keep children's records up to date. For example, staff did not have up-to-date local authority review plans and education plans for one child. This limits staff's and managers' ability to review and keep track of children's progress.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the regulator has an up-to-date statement of purpose, in line with regulation.

Monitoring is poor and this means that shortfalls are not always identified quickly and addressed. Two requirements raised at the last inspection have not been met and are restated. Two recommendations raised have also not been met and requirements have now been raised.

Managers have used the services of agency staff to cover when there are staffing shortfalls. Consistent agency staff know the children and contribute to them receiving continuity of care.

Despite the shortfalls identified, partner agencies report that managers and staff work well with them and keep them informed about the well-being of the children.

## 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>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))</p>	26 August 2022
<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>maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(viii))</p>	26 August 2022

<p>In particular, ensure that managers understand children's academic progress, and for children who are temporarily out of education, ensure that they engage in constructive activities during the school day.</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;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(d))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and was restated.</p>	<p>26 August 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 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;</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)(c)(h))</p>	<p>26 August 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p>	<p>26 August 2022</p>

<p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and was restated.</p>	26 August 2022
<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>The individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</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 (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))</p>	26 August 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))</p>	26 August 2022
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p>	26 August 2022



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).

26 August 2022

When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))

## 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:** SC403789

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cove Care Residential Limited

**Registered provider address:** 16 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands  
WV1 4BL

**Responsible individual:** Rachel Oliver

**Registered manager:** Sarah-Jayne Garbett

## Inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
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