

# 1226977

Registered provider: Moonreach Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to two children with social and/or emotional difficulties.

The registered manager post has been vacant since May 2022.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

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:** 14 September 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
14/09/2021	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Good
11/02/2019	Full	Good
25/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

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

Children have been impacted by a significant turnover in the staff and management team of the home over recent months. One child commented that, although they had some positive relationships with staff, there have been too many changes. Children have been less settled, with an increase in some children going missing from home and being at risk.

An external professional spoke of the significant difficulties one child has with change and was concerned that instability in staffing at the home was having a direct impact on them.

Leaders recognise that improvements are required in supporting staff to really understand their role as advocates for children. This includes helping staff to fully understand the emotional challenge of change for children and the subsequent impacts on behaviour.

The manager has placed a strong emphasis on improving practice in recording and evidence-gathering. For example, staff have now started working on memory books and photo journals to capture the achievements and positive experiences of each child.

Children have complex and challenging starting points, and some progress has been made. One child who has not had a stable experience of attending school is now working back towards full-time attendance. One child is not currently in education and has had a period of inactivity since finishing a recent job opportunity. Staff are working with the child and their placing authority to explore options for future study or employment.

Staff work closely with child and adolescent mental health services to promote and support the well-being of children. This is helping to reduce incidents of self-harm and to help children to manage their emotions.

Children enjoy activities and opportunities outside the home. One child has made very positive links with a local youth club, where she now mentors younger children. The child has also made excellent progress at the local Sea Cadets. Another child is focusing on her music, art and creative writing and wants to develop her composing skills.

Children live in a homely environment. The grounds are well maintained, with a pleasant garden space for children to access freely. The kitchen and communal spaces have recently been redecorated. Children's bedrooms are age appropriate and personalised. One child told the inspector that she had total control over the way her bedroom was furnished and decorated.

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

Staff fully recognise the risks and concerns that can arise when incidents occur, for example, older children have been able to encourage younger children to go missing with them. Staff can talk about strategies that they are using to try to minimise these risks. However, risk assessment strategies are not clear, particularly around managing episodes of children going missing. The manager has identified this in her action planning, but the quality of some risk management plans is yet to show improvement.

One child is vulnerable to sexual exploitation and there have been concerns about her relationships with older males when she is away from the home. Staff have taken steps to work closely with the placing authority and police to address these concerns. Managers and staff have taken an active role in strategy and planning meetings around keeping this child safe. Staff recognise the complex challenge of supporting the child's safety as she moves into adulthood.

Staff talk about some inconsistency of practice when managing children's behaviours. Staff recognise that sometimes children will play into this and use it as an opportunity to split the team. The manager fully recognises this dynamic and is prioritising improving consistency.

An incident occurred in which a child made an allegation about the way staff had spoken to her. This had not been recognised as an allegation and remained in the complaints folder. The company's allegations procedures had not been followed and the appropriate notifications and communications had not been sent to external agencies, including the local authority designated officer and Ofsted.

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

The new manager demonstrates passion and enthusiasm for change. She is confident that the home is moving in a positive direction. She recognises that there has been some inconsistency and a lack of continuity in leadership that has had an impact on staff morale.

Staff have confidence in the new manager and can talk about improvements she has made. However, it is taking time for change to be embedded into everyday practice.

Staff meeting minutes and supervisions indicate that staff concerns around team cohesion and consistent practice are being discussed. Staff also talk about some difficult staff dynamics that have had an undermining effect on the manager's ability to drive forward her plans. Leaders have recognised these challenges and are taking the required steps to address these concerns.

Senior leaders are providing strong oversight of the home to assist the manager in carrying out the required changes. There is evidence of regular audits and frequently updated actions plans that support improvement at the home.

Leaders say that recruitment has been a significant challenge. The home uses a lot of part-time staff and senior leaders recognise that this has contributed to children's and social workers' perception of constant staff turnover. Leaders have placed this at the heart of their action plan and are working on recruitment strategies and looking at the structure of the team to create more stability for children.

The new manager feels that support from the organisation has been excellent during her induction.

A newly updated workforce plan places strong emphasis on establishing consistency across the whole team, whether that be in staff cover or in boundaries and motivation. Leaders recognise that changes in management inevitably bring some anxiety for staff, so they are working hard to ensure that staff feel supported and engaged.

The manager recognises that consistent supervision and professional development of staff have been areas of weakness. The manager recognises that working with children who have experienced trauma can have a high emotional impact on staff and they need the right support and skills to be resilient and effective. She has put a planning schedule in place and is working hard to ensure that staff get frequent and good-quality supervision and training.

## 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 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 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>help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii))</p>	<p>31 October 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 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 work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</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;</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 (2)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f))</p>	<p>31 October 2022</p>

<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children’s home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular—</p> <p>provide for liaison and co-operation with any local authority which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about current or ongoing abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the home is located. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b))</p>	<p>31 October 2022</p>
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## 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:** 1226977

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

**Registered provider:** Moonreach Limited

**Registered provider address:** 4 Dane John Works, Gordon Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3PP

**Responsible individual:** Fern Cowie

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector



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