

1271213

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is operated by a private company and is registered to provide care for up to five children with emotional and/or social difficulties.

The home has not had a registered manager since September 2020.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 26 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/07/2022	Full	Inadequate
08/02/2022	Full	Good
21/05/2019	Full	Good
15/01/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child lives in the home. Since the last inspection, three children have moved out the home. Although some of the children moved out in a short timescale, staff worked hard to ensure that the children had a positive ending, with cards, gifts and photographs of their time in the home. Staff have remained in contact with some children and one child said, 'Now I have moved out, I realise that some of the staff really did care and wanted the best for me.'

The staff have established good relationships with the child. The child said that they now feel listened to, cared for, and could see the improvements that the new managers had made in the home. The child said that all staff are now clear about the routines in the home. They said, 'When they [staff] say no they all say no. As much as I didn't like it at first, it's a much better place to live.'

Children have engaged in education and training. Prior to children moving out of the home, they achieved relevant qualifications. There is good communication between the staff and school professionals. This has improved the attendance and educational outcomes for all children.

Children are supported to attend health appointments and are registered with local health services. Staff complete direct work with the children who do not attend health appointments to encourage them to attend. This direct work is effective, and children who have previously failed to attend appointments have now attended all planned appointments.

Children receive support to enjoy a range of activities, and this is developing their self-esteem and confidence. One child said, 'I go to the gym a few times a week and have tried Pilates and kick boxing, it's really helping my mental health.'

Children are supported to maintain and develop their cultural or religious beliefs. Staff now understand the importance of children's heritage and have spent time learning together with children and their families about their faith. Children say that they are now able to talk about their faith and staff will help them to observe religious requirements, including dress, diet and visiting religious settings.

The staff help the children to see their family and friends. The staff maintain regular communication with parents and support children to travel to see their families. One child said, 'I love spending time with my family and although I live miles away that is never a problem to the staff.'

The management team has created an independence programme for children at the home. This has supported children to prepare for independence and develop their skills and competencies to live independently. Additionally, life-story journals have

been introduced, which are child-focused and reflect the child's experiences while living at the home.

The children's records provide a detailed picture of their experiences and progress. However, some of the language used in their records is judgemental and colloquial. Staff need to ensure that they write in a clear and non-stigmatising way, which is easy for children to understand.

The home is now a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. Children were involved in the redecoration of the home, and each bedroom is personalised.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The child who is currently living in the home said that they feel safe. They can talk to staff about any worries they have. They understand that the new boundaries put in place for them are there to protect and support them.

Staff support children with individual key-work sessions on important issues. These are focused and specific to the children's needs. Staff support children to engage in educational courses on topics such as gangs, bullying and substance misuse. This is helping children to understand the potential risks in the home and around the community.

Positive behaviour is promoted. Children are praised for this and receive incentives for doing well. There has been one physical intervention since the last inspection, and this was managed well. There are clear recordings in place and both the child and staff had the opportunity to discuss the incident afterwards. Oversight of this documentation has significantly improved, with managers reviewing all incidents and highlighting any changes required to practice.

Assessments of risk are in place and updated regularly. There are strategies in place to protect children from harm. Staff follow the missing-from-home protocol. However, return interviews have not been conducted for all children.

Medication practices in the home have improved. Staff have all had refresher training in medication. New procedures and audits have been implemented to ensure that any discrepancies are identified and appropriate action taken. Medication that is no longer required has been removed from the home and dispensed of appropriately.

Allegations and investigations have been managed well. The records detail the actions taken and the outcome. However, when children make complaints, the content of the complaint is not fully considered. The manager does provide a written response. However, it was missed that a child had made an allegation about staff practice within the complaint. This was later identified by a responsible individual from another region who was conducting an audit of the home.

Staff work with other agencies to keep children safe after significant incidents. This benefits the staff by having a better understanding of their role and responsibilities in safeguarding and the roles of all safeguarding professionals.

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

The home has not had a registered manager since September 2020. There has been a significant delay in the interim manager applying to register. This was submitted on the day of the inspection.

The interim manager has remained working in the home and there is now a new deputy manager. Together, they have high aspirations for children and have reviewed all the documentation in the home to ensure that children's progress and experiences are captured. They have arranged training and development sessions for staff to review care practices and set out clear expectations for staff.

There have been several changes to the staff team. Since the last inspection, four staff have left and this has meant that there are vacancies in the staff team. The shortfalls in the rota have been covered by staff who know the children. New staff have been recruited since the last inspection, and the safer recruitment policy is followed.

Managers and staff use training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and meet the children's needs. For example, all staff have attended training to better understand risks associated with safeguarding, medication and managing behaviours. Staff coming into the home have received an appropriate induction.

Staff meetings take place on a regular basis. The manager uses these meetings as an opportunity to provide refresher training on specific issues. Staff have regular supervision. However, the quality is variable and lacks a focus on children and their personal development.

Monitoring and review systems are in place, but still need strengthening. Lessons learned following the inadequate judgement have taken place and the outcomes shared with staff. However, there is no direction on what needs to happen next.

The quality-of-care report has now been submitted. However, this is overly descriptive and does not identify areas of strength and possible weaknesses in the home's care. The interim manager accepted these shortfalls, and before the inspection ended had considered what could be implemented to continue to improve practices in the home.

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 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>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(h))</p>	18 December 2022
<p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaints, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (1) (3))</p>	18 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4.)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return-home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the

Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

- The registered person should ensure that the 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 about 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 quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1271213

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Hobart House, Oakwater Drive, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 3SR

Responsible individual: Karen Brougham

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Senior His Majesty's Inspector
Nichola Croft, Social Care Inspector

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