

1231458

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to four children with complex needs and who have had adverse early childhood experiences. There were four children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The registered manager has left since the last inspection. A manager is in post, who has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2022	Full	Good
05/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/07/2019	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by a committed staff team who enjoy their time with children and want them to succeed. Children develop positive and trusted relationships with the staff who care for them. They know they can talk to staff if they are worried about anything and do so. Supportive and caring staff enable children to have positive experiences of living at the home.

Staff take children's views seriously and children say that they feel listened to, which they appreciate. Children have made no complaints since the last inspection. Children develop some coping skills and some children develop confidence and self-esteem that have improved their emotional health. A child has recently sung in public as part of a community event and this reflects their increased confidence and the progress they have made.

Staff offer children positive day-to-day experiences and activities. It can be a challenge to get the children to engage. However, children have had opportunities to have fun and experience different activities. For example, children enjoyed a holiday to the coast in the summer, have been on a driving experience and to the circus.

Persistent and resolute staff work hard to engage children to make positive changes to their lives. For one child, missing from home episodes have reduced and for another child, incidents of self-harm have also reduced. Some children misuse cannabis, which does pose a concern for their health. Work done by staff to discourage this behaviour is clear and support for children continues in this area.

Children's progress in education is mixed. Two children have done well in education. Good staff advocacy helped one child to be able to attend a school more suited to their needs. Another child sought employment independently after successfully completing a college course. Although this didn't work out, staff continue to support the child to seek alternative employment. For two other children, their progress in education is limited. One child is not in school and does not consistently engage in educational activity during the school day. Another child's college placement ended and staff did not communicate proactively with college staff about this. While progress has been slow in sourcing an alternative, a plan is now formulated for the new year for this child.

Children are developing aspirations for their future. They are also involved in decisions affecting them and their care plans. Most children want to remain living at the home until they are able to move on to independence, which is a positive reflection of their experience of living at the home and the quality of care they receive.

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

Drug use by some children is a concern, but staff are working tenaciously to try and discourage this behaviour. Children sometimes bring cannabis into the home. Staff carry out room searches. If they find drugs, staff confiscate these and report the incidents to the police. Staff also talk with children about the risks of drugs misuse and link children in with specialist services.

Some children are vulnerable to criminal exploitation. Staff are alert to these risks. They work effectively with partner agencies to understand and help manage these risks to children. Frequent multi-agency meetings means that key professionals are coming together with staff to discuss and review risks to children. A collaborative approach is helping to keep children safe from harm.

The effectiveness of staff's actions to reduce risks relating to children going missing from home is mixed. When children go missing from home, staff notify the police promptly. It is not always clear that staff look for children. In addition, one child's plan is for staff to contact them periodically when he is spending time away from the home. However, staff do not always follow this plan. For one child, incidents have reduced, while another child continues to go missing from home regularly.

Staff respond well to children who self-harm. They provide good emotional support and as a result, incidents of self-harming behaviour have reduced.

Managers have put in place risk assessments regarding children smoking in their bedrooms. Some measures to mitigate risk, such as children handing in lighters when they come home and direct work to support children to reduce and stop smoking are in place. However, staff do not implement these measures consistently.

The systems in place to recruit staff safely are largely good. Recently, there has been an error in verifying the reasons staff have left past employment. This reduces the safety in recruitment, but managers are aware of this and have a plan to address this shortfall.

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

The registered manager left in June 2022 and the deputy manager took over. This provided some continuity for children and staff. There has been a delay in the new manager submitting their application to register with Ofsted. After four months, the application has now been submitted and is being processed.

Some aspects of monitoring are good. For example, there is a comprehensive system to support the manager's oversight of the home. This system is implemented and aids the manager's detailed knowledge of children's needs and progress. However, the review of the quality of care does not include the views of others or an action plan that focuses on key areas to develop care in the home.

An independent visitor comes to the home each month. Reports are poor quality. They show a lack of curiosity to understand incidents and behaviour. Leaders have now employed a new visitor. While the provider has taken some action, the impact of this has yet to be realised.

Managers do not consistently notify Ofsted about all relevant incidents. As a result, the regulator's oversight of things that happen at the home is hindered.

The manager is committed to children and have the respect of staff and other professionals. A strength of this home is the ability of staff to work in partnership with professionals to support children's safety and welfare. This is good for children as their networks communicate well and are cohesive.

Staff receive opportunities to discuss children's needs and progress, reflect on their practice and develop their knowledge and skills. Staff receive individual supervision and the team meets regularly with each other. A clinical psychologist attends these meetings to support staff to deepen their understanding of children. These factors contribute to staff's understanding of children and their professional development.

Staff have access to numerous training opportunities. They are keen to take these up, and managers have an annual training plan to make this manageable. In addition, staff benefit from support from a clinician to aid their reflective approach. As a result, staff can develop their skills to work with 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 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>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p>	28 February 2023

<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)(iii)(iv)(viii))</p> <p>In particular, the provider should ensure that children excluded from school return to education as soon as possible and that they complete suitable educational activities during school time.</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— 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 a child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(i))</p> <p>In particular, implement guidance set out in risk assessments to stop children smoking and doing so in their bedrooms and ensure that staff consistently follow missing from home protocols for each child.</p>	28 February 2023
<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 (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the provider must ensure that they ascertain the reasons that applicants left all previous employment working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	28 February 2023
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</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 any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p>	28 February 2023

<p>(Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))</p> <p>In particular, the provider must ensure that they notify the regulator when there are serious incidents involving the police, or otherwise, without delay.</p>	
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.</p> <p>(Regulation 45 (2)(a)(c) (5))</p> <p>In particular, the provider must ensure that they gather feedback from others about the home and incorporate this into their review of the quality of care in the home. The author of the report should also include a clear plan of action to improve or maintain the quality of care children receive.</p>	<p>28 February 2023</p>

Recommendation

The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 1231458

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sherlock Healthcare Services Limited

Registered provider address: Made Simple Group, 20 to 22 Wenlock Road,
London N1 7GU

Responsible individual: Hilton Mutariswa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Karol Keenan, Social Care Inspector

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