

SC379123

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home offers care for up to five children with mental health, psychological and/or emotional difficulties and associated complex care needs.

The manager is registered with Ofsted. She is working towards a qualification in leadership and management at level 5.

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 6 September 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- There has been ineffective monitoring and reviewing of the service, which has impacted on the quality of care that children have received.
- Staff do not effectively help children to attend school and engage in learning activities when not attending school.
- Managers and staff do not know the children's education and training targets as they do not have up-to-date records of their educational plans.
- Staff and managers are not consistently delivering care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.
- Staff and managers are not helping children to lead healthy lifestyles.
- Staff and managers do not know if the children have unmet health needs as they do not have copies of their health assessments.
- Staff and managers do not consistently consult with children about their day-to-day care.
- The home environment is poor and does not show children that they are cared about and valued.
- Most staff do not receive regular supervision and appraisals.
- Managers do not act on recommendations made by the fire service.
- Managers do not notify the regulator when serious incidents occur.
- Children's records are not kept up to date.
- Managers do not complete a review of the quality of care as required by regulation.

The care of children

Four children live in the home. One child has left the home and moved into supported accommodation. One child has moved into the home since the last inspection.

Staff and managers do not provide the children with consistent daily routines. For example, children do not have clear mealtimes, and often they do not know what is on the menu for their dinner. One child told the inspector that planned activities are regularly cancelled at short notice without a reasonable explanation, which makes them sad. This does not help children to feel that staff care about them.

Most children are not making measurable academic progress with their education, and their school attendance is not improving. Shortfalls in staff practice do not support children's learning. For example, staff do not know what the children's

learning targets are because they do not have copies of the children's educational reviews and plans. Managers do not have systems in place to track children's progress and understand any barriers to learning that the children might have. As a result, they don't understand children's experiences in education or any additional support needs the children may have. Not supporting children's education may impact on children's ability to attain qualifications and their future aspirations and careers.

Staff and managers do not promote or model what leading a healthy lifestyle looks like for the children. For example, children are not offered support and education around vaping and the impact of this on their health. Some children told the inspector that staff vape in their presence.

Staff and managers do not have records of children's health reviews. As a result, they do not know whether children have any unmet health needs. This poor practice does not promote the children's emotional and physical health.

The home environment does not provide the children with a warm and welcoming family home where they can relax and unwind. Staff have not provided a child with adequate storage in their bedroom. Clothes were falling out of the wardrobe, and more clothes were piled next to their bed. Some children's bedrooms are bare, and areas of the home require decoration. The car park was littered with refuse that had fallen out of the bin. This was visible from outside the home.

Children recognise that the home needs refurbishing and redecorating and have raised their views through children's meetings. However, staff and managers have failed to act on these requests. This can leave the children feeling unvalued or not listened to.

The safety of children

A significant incident occurred involving an agency staff member, which left some of the children feeling unsafe. Although managers took appropriate steps to address concerns, they failed to notify Ofsted of this incident. Not notifying Ofsted of serious incidents was raised as a shortfall at the last inspection and has not been addressed.

A fire risk assessment has been completed. However, managers have failed to act on the recommendations raised in this review by the fire service. Not taking fire safety issues seriously leaves children and staff at risk of harm. Ofsted made a referral to the fire service following this inspection.

When staff restrain children to help keep them safe, managers do not consistently ensure that children and staff are given opportunities to speak about the incident and give their views on what happened. Furthermore, managers do not review the incident record. These are missed opportunities to reflect on the incident and identify and address any concerns.

Staff and managers do not consistently use rewards and consequences to help children to learn what appropriate and inappropriate behaviours are. This shortfall was raised repeatedly by the independent visitor in their monthly reports. However, managers and staff have failed to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The leadership and management of the home are poor. The monitoring and reviewing of the home by managers is ineffective. It does not help to maintain good standards of care for children and limits the progress that they make. Managers do not act on recommendations made by the independent visitor or Ofsted promptly and effectively to bring about positive change.

All requirements raised at the last inspection have been repeated as managers failed to address the shortfalls identified. Two compliance notices have been raised following this inspection. These are linked to the welfare and care of the children and the leadership and management of the home.

Managers have failed to monitor staff development, and so some staff have not attained their level 3 qualification or equivalent within the timescales set out in regulation.

Managers do not complete a review of the quality of care provided to children or a workforce development plan to inform the development of the home. They have failed to submit their updated statement of purpose to the regulator within the recommended timescales.

Staff and the manager do not receive supervision regularly or an annual appraisal. This is a missed opportunity to provide staff and the manager with guidance and an opportunity to reflect on their own development and practice. These shortfalls contribute to the lack of progress and good-quality care being provided to children.

During the inspection, managers did not have access to an agency staff member's safer recruitment information. Not keeping recruitment information accessible to inspectors highlights a shortfall in the management and storage of important information.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
21/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</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>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</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;</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of the child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.</p>	28 May 2023

<p>Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(vii)(ix)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	
<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>help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</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. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	<p>28 May 2023</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 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>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	<p>28 May 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must—</p>	<p>28 May 2023</p>

<p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</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>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	28 May 2023
<p>A responsible individual must—</p> <p>have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))</p>	28 May 2023
<p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the 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, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p>	28 May 2023

<p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))</p> <p>This relates to ensuring that all staff obtain the relevant training within the required time frames.</p>	
<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>	28 May 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p>	28 May 2023

<p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	
<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; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	28 May 2023
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(C))</p>	28 May 2023

This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.	
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a))</p> <p>The registered person must complete and submit a review of the quality of care within the required time frames.</p>	28 May 2023

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff evidence how positive behaviour of children is promoted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC379123

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: Chelsea Simpson

Inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023