

1234317

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns and operates the home, which offers short- to medium-term care for up to six children aged from 11 to 17 years. The children may have experienced trauma and exploitation and may also have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2022. Five children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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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	good
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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: 10 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 18 October 2022, an assurance inspection found serious and widespread concerns around the safety of children and the effectiveness of leaders. Compliance notices were issued in respect of regulations 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard). These were monitored on 7 December 2022, when inspectors noted improvements sufficient to deem the compliance notices met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
25/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/02/2020	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

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

Care is tailored to children's particular vulnerabilities. This is more effective for some children than others and, therefore, children make progress to different degrees. For some children, progress is notable, especially around understanding and controlling their emotions. For other children, progress is disrupted when they disengage from education, or their behaviour becomes more unpredictable. For these children, this results in more frequent incidents where staff have to hold them to keep everyone safe.

Staff receive guidance, instruction and training related to the children's needs and the home's statement of purpose. However, while the instinctive approach of staff is to be nurturing, this is not underpinned by their understanding of a corresponding theoretical model of care.

Staff do not show a consistent knowledge of the home's policies or the individualised aspects of children's plans. This does not promote a whole-team approach to caring for children and managing their behaviours effectively.

The quality of relationships between the children fluctuates. There are times of conflict and staff measures to prevent this have not always been effective.

The premises are spacious and there has been recent redecoration of the lounge and hallways. Children's artwork, books and games make these areas feel homely. However, some communal areas of the home show signs of wear and tear, as well as some minor damage. This does not align with the therapeutic and nurturing ethos of the home.

There are established relationships between the staff and children. The quality of discussions with children is a strength of the home. These focus on reducing risk and promoting well-being and staff use their trusted relationships to broach sensitive topics. Professionals speak well of the leaders and the staff and are satisfied with the quality of care. Children's health needs are met, including through use of clinical expertise around children's emotional well-being. This psychologically informed advice provides valuable insight for staff and shows their effective collaboration with other professionals.

Some children live a long way from their family and friends and staff understand that this can feel frightening or lonely for children. Staff support children to regularly see people who mean a lot to them, even when this involves travelling long distances. Maintaining family relationships also promotes the possibility of returning to live with families for some children.

Shortfalls in care planning when children move into and out of the home led to a requirement at the last inspection. This part of a child's journey in care is now managed more effectively, and the requirement is met. The responsible individual, manager and deputy manager consult with the staff and the children prior to any child moving into the home to ensure that staff can meet the child's needs and that the least disruption is experienced by the children already living in the home.

The risk assessments that determine which children are suitable to move into the home are thorough. Plans to make children feel welcome and settle quickly are successful. The efforts of staff to get to know children help children to overcome their anxieties about moving in. This promotes stability for the children living in the home and a smooth and positive experience for children being welcomed into the home.

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

The measures that the staff implement to ensure online safety for children are not effective. The measures do not prevent children from accessing people and material that are not age-appropriate, which leaves children at potential risk of being targeted by both peers and adults. Checks and safeguards in place have not prevented incidents and this leaves children vulnerable.

Children sometimes need to be held to keep themselves or others safe and this is done as a last resort. However, on one occasion, a brief ground hold was used which did not align with children's plans. Leaders and managers identified the shortfalls in this practice and responded swiftly and effectively to prevent repetition.

At times, children express their emotions by using inappropriate language and this is not always challenged by the staff. This does not support children to understand what is and is not socially acceptable.

Risks are understood by staff. The manager's comprehensive knowledge of children's vulnerabilities evidences that he is equipped to provide effective support to the team in this regard. The incident and physical intervention records reflect that staff implement their training in de-escalation techniques. The management oversight and evaluation of incidents are strengths, especially as learning from incidents is gathered and then applied to improving staff practice. However, the risk assessments narrative and ratings do not align and this does not always direct staff's focus to where it needs to be in order to keep children safe.

Staff report and search for children when they go missing from home and, as a result, they are proactive in returning children home swiftly and safely. However, independent return home interviews do not always take place following a child going missing. This is a missed opportunity to understand the push-and-pull factors for children who go missing. However, the manager challenges this and the staff in the home try to compensate by encouraging children to talk about where they have been and why they went missing. This promotes children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's leaders and managers are committed to the children and have high expectations of the staff regarding the quality of care provided for the children. There is evidence of a shared vision and collaborative working within the management team.

Leaders and managers know and understand the strengths and weakness of the home. This has enabled them to prioritise and focus on the quality of care provided to keep children safer and promote placement stability and longevity.

The manager knows the children well and there are systems in place which ensure that each child receives care and support that is individual to their needs. Each child's background and heritage are respected and promoted by staff. This means that children are treated as individuals and can make progress from their starting points.

The manager has helpful links with the parents and professionals involved in the children's lives. This benefits the children as they have a network of adults around them that work together to identify their needs and any risks that may affect them. The adults then find solutions and take action to ensure that children are safe and achieve their goals and fulfil their potential.

The staff team and manager receive regular supervision that is reflective and enables them to identify learning and development needs in line with the needs of the children. Team meetings take place on a regular basis. They are well attended by staff and give them the opportunity to contribute to the development of practice. This means that the children receive good-quality care which is tailored to their individual needs.

The quality of professional relationships within the home is monitored and understood by the manager. The manager holds the staff to account in respect of their professional conduct and is effective in challenging when their conduct falls below the expectations of the organisation.

There are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the children. The manager has a clear contingency plan in place which ensures that any gaps in staffing due to vacancies, annual leave or sickness are covered and provides the least possible disruption to the children.

The responsible individual has had a positive impact on the management of the home and the quality of care that the children receive. They are visible within the home and provide practical support to the manager and staff team. This has improved the morale within the management and staff team.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons 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—</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>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vii))</p> <p>This refers to ensuring that staff know and follow children's plans, know and apply models of care, and understand the role of the local authority designated officer in keeping children safe.</p> <p>It also refers to reviewing and being assured of the children's online activity.</p> <p>Risk assessments and safety plans should be summarised in a way that makes it clear what staff should be vigilant about,</p>	30 June 2023

including where there are new and emerging risks for children.	
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</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 develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;</p> <p>de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iv)(xi))</p> <p>This refers to managing conflict between children effectively to promote their safety and well-being.</p>	30 June 2023
<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 refers to ensuring that emerging risks are properly reflected in risk assessments and safety plans.</p>	30 June 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met. This includes maintaining the physical environment; doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value

them as an individual. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

- The registered provider should have expectations for high standards of behaviour for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour (including use of bad language) should be challenged and discussed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

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'.

Childrens home details

Unique reference number: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Childrens home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Registered provider address: Your Chapter, Hobart House, 3 Oakwater Avenue, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle SK8 3SR

Responsible individual: Sharron Edwards

Registered manager: Sabur Khan

Inspectors

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Inspector
Shirin Khan, Social Care Inspector

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