

SC397933

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately owned. It provides care for two children with complex mental health and emotional and behavioural needs. The home registered in July 2009.

The manager's application to register is being processed by Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 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	requires improvement to be 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: 8 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/06/2022	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

At the time of this inspection, there were two children living at the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved on from the home. This was unplanned and the child did not return after going missing from the home. As such, this was not a positive ending. However, managers have met the child since they left and took them out for a farewell meal.

The children told the inspector that they have positive relationships with some staff. However, staff dynamics are such that staff are not always working together well as a team to provide children with consistent care. Children say that at times, some staff have disagreements, including verbal arguments, which they have overheard. They told the inspector that when these arguments occur, they feel anxious, as these incidents remind them of their lived trauma. Although managers have taken some steps to address this issue, the children continue to be worried about the dynamics and disagreements between some staff and the impact of this on their own emotional well-being.

The home environment, while clean and tidy overall, does not provide a warm and welcoming environment for the children. For example, the lounge carpet is stained and needs replacing and one of the kitchen cupboards was locked and labelled for staff use only. The lock on a child's bedroom door was broken. It was only fixed after being pointed out by inspectors.

Both children living at the home are not in full-time education. They access online education and receive one-to-one tutoring in the home. There is evidence that staff and managers are advocating on behalf of the children for them to return to mainstream school. However, staff and managers do not provide the children with consistent routines outside of their tutoring hours. For example, one child was watching television with staff during time dedicated to education, interrupting their peer who was trying to focus on completing their tutoring lesson at the time.

Staff support children to spend quality time with their close family and friends. Children have opportunities to express their wishes and feelings through conversations with staff, during key-work sessions and at children's meetings. This supports children in making decisions about their day-to-day lives and things that matter to them.

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

At the last inspection, concerns were raised that children were going missing from the home without the staff's knowledge. Children were using opportunities to leave

the home through a downstairs fire door. This concern remains, as managers have not made sufficient arrangements to mitigate this risk. This practice does not support keeping children safe.

When children do go missing from the home, staff search the local areas and share concerns with relevant agencies such as social workers, police and their families. Staff and managers welcome the children warmly when they return home.

Staff and managers do not ensure that children's risk assessments are kept up to date when incidents of concern take place. One child's risk assessment of self-harm does not give staff clear step-by-step guidance on what action staff should take if the risks escalate to the point where external health professionals, such as paramedics are required. This has not yet had a detrimental impact on the children's safety but has the potential to do so if left unaddressed.

Managers have reviewed the home's location risk assessment, but this does not contain information from partner agencies. Managers have meetings planned with some partner agencies to ensure that the risk assessment is brought up to date to reflect all known local risks.

The safer recruitment processes in place need improvement as they are not compliant with regulation. For example, two employment files viewed by the inspector did not have the staff's full employment histories. In addition, managers had not considered seeking a good conduct certificate for someone who had moved to England from overseas. Vulnerabilities in recruitment practice does not help to ensure that safe adults care for the children.

Staff and managers are proactive in reporting safeguarding disclosures made by children to professionals such as social workers and the police. This helps the children to feel safe and listened to. During the inspection, children raised concerns about one staff member's practice. The inspectors shared these concerns with relevant professionals for them to investigate.

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

The monitoring and review of the home by managers need improvement. Children are not consistently receiving good-quality care. Managers have failed to meet four requirements raised at the last inspection linked to the quality of care, safeguarding, safer recruitment processes and maintaining up-to-date records for the children.

Staff and managers do not promptly act on recommendations made by external agencies, such as the independent visitor, to improve the quality of care given to children.

Managers do not submit their statement of purpose promptly to the regulator when this has been reviewed. This does not enable the regulator to have an oversight of changes that would have occurred at the home.

Staff and the manager do not keep children's records up to date. For example, staff did not have up-to-date local authority health assessments. This limits the ability of staff and managers to review and keep track of children's progress.

Most staff are up to date with their mandatory training. However, not all staff have completed the level 3 qualification or equivalent within the required timescales. Managers have recently introduced a new monitoring tool to track staff's progress and to mitigate the risk of further delay. This system is yet to be fully implemented and so its effectiveness not yet realised.

Staff say that they feel supported by the manager and can approach her when they need support. Supervision and staff meetings take place regularly. The manager uses these to discuss any practice issues and areas for development.

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, The 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; and</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; and</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(i))</p>	31 July 2023
<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; and</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v))</p>	31 July 2023

<p>This relates to ensuring that risk assessments are up to date and staff consistently follow the guidance set out in these documents to fully promote children's safety. In addition, managers are to take action to mitigate the known risk of children being able to leave the home without the knowledge of staff through a particular door.</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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential;</p> <p>and 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)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>	<p>31 July 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must—</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>31 July 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <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>31 July 2023</p>

<p>The individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</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> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(d) (4)(a)(b))</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>In particular, the manager must ensure that records are written without delay and signed and dated by the author.</p>	<p>31 July 2023</p>

Recommendation

- The registered person must ensure that the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home are reviewed at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing them. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: SC397933

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: Amber Daker

Inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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