

1213828

Registered provider: Inspire Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties and learning disabilities.

There were three children living in the home at the time of inspection.

There has been no registered manager since 30 November 2022. There is an interim manager in post who has submitted his application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

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: 25 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and one child has moved in. Children who move into the home have opportunities to visit the home and meet the staff prior to moving in. Professionals say that staff and children warmly welcome new children when they arrive at the home. This helps children to settle quickly.

One child's placement ended earlier than anticipated. The provider did not communicate effectively with the placing authority to provide opportunities to help the child to remain in the home. However, staff supported the child to prepare for the move. As a result, the child experienced a positive transition.

Children say that they are happy, have adults who they can talk to, and feel listened to. Staff have built positive relationships with children and want the best for them. One social worker said, 'Staff provide unconditional support to children.'

There have been several changes to the staff team, and children said that it had been a difficult time. The interim manager has worked hard to establish a new consistent staff team.

Children attend school and are making progress. Staff support children to plan for further education and employment opportunities. Independence is promoted in line with each child's age and abilities. This ensures that children have the necessary life skills in preparation for adult life.

Children enjoy a range of activities. Staff provide opportunities for children to have fun and engage in activities of interest, including horse riding and gymnastics. Staff engage with children positively, including through role play and arts and crafts. Staff promote relationships between children through days out to the park, visits to places of interest, and trips to the beach to build sandcastles.

Staff support children to spend time with family and friends. Staff ensure that arrangements are in line with children's plans and are safe. Staff have positive relationships with parents and family members. This enables children to develop a sense of belonging and positive identity.

The home environment is spacious. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their taste. However, there are areas that require attention to ensure that the home is a clean, welcoming, and homely environment. The sofas in the living area appear dirty and the walls in communal areas need to be repainted. The garden is not maintained or equipped for children to enjoy spending time outside. The interim manager and deputy have identified areas for improvement, which will enhance the home environment for the children.

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

Children feel safe. Staff understand risks and vulnerabilities for children and understand how to protect them. Written plans and assessments provide clear guidance for staff to follow.

Staff work with children to develop their understanding of risks in an age-appropriate way. Ongoing discussions on topics such as online safety, appropriate relationships, behaviour and exploitation, support children in making positive choices and increasing their knowledge.

Staff provide support to children to manage their emotions and behaviour. Staff respond in a calm way to ensure that children have time and space to regulate their emotions. Staff develop strategies to support children in an effective way, such as going for a drive or utilising sensory toys. The positive and consistent strategies used by staff mean that staff do not physically restrain children.

The interim manager ensures that staff implement consequences that are appropriate and effective. This helps children to recognise the impact of their behaviour. Children receive incentives and rewards for some of the positive choices they make. However, further work could be embedded into practice to celebrate children's positive choices.

The interim manager ensures that incidents are recorded, and information is shared in a timely way with relevant professionals to effectively safeguard and plan for children. There have been no significant incidents, allegations or complaints.

Children's privacy is compromised as sensors on bedroom doors are used when there are no specific risks identified to warrant their use. The interim manager removed these during the inspection.

The recruitment of staff is in line with safer recruitment practices. This ensures that only staff who are appropriately vetted and checked can work with children.

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

The home has not had a registered manager since November 2022. The provider has taken steps to appoint an interim manager during this period. The interim manager has submitted his application to register with Ofsted.

The interim manager has been in place since May 2023. This followed a period of instability with the home's management and retention of staff. The interim manager and provider have worked hard to secure a stable staff team, which is now in place.

The interim manager is suitably qualified and experienced. He is supported by a deputy manager who has the skills and experience to offer effective support and oversight alongside the manager.

The managers are working as a team to make necessary improvements to the home and improve care practices. The managers have a clear action plan and are aware of the areas for development. Staff are committed to developing their practice and positive outcomes for children.

Staff feel supported and enjoy working in the home. This is a positive change since the interim manager has been in place. Staff have regular opportunities to discuss children's needs, practice issues, and development through reflective supervision and team meetings.

There is a clear improvement in management oversight since the interim manager has been appointed. However, the interim manager has not ensured that relevant plans are received from the placing authority in a timely way. This could prevent staff from having an up-to-date understanding of children's needs and plans. Children's records have improved. However, some of the language used is not helpful for children. The interim manager has plans in place to address this and ensure that all written records are non-stigmatising and child friendly.

Staff regularly consult with children to ensure that their views are sought and acted on. Children feel listened to, and changes have been made to activities and items in the home based on their wishes. Staff advocate for children and make sure that children can speak to an independent advocate and ensure their voice is heard.

The interim manager ensures that internal and external monitoring of the home takes place. However, the quality of care review does not include feedback from key stakeholders or staff to enhance the quality of the report. Reports from the independent visitor have not been received in a timely way to ensure effective oversight by the regulator. This was due to an error in administration by the provider and was rectified during the inspection.

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;</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>ensure that staff—</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</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; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home is clean, that furniture in the home, including sofas, is cleaned or replaced, and that the garden is maintained and equipped for the children.</p>	14 September 2023
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p>	14 September 2023

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority;</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that moves from the home are well planned, children are supported with the move, and relevant plans and assessments from the placing authority are available for each child.</p>	
<p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children’s home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and</p> <p>the registered provider—</p> <p>is an organisation or a partnership;</p> <p>does not satisfy regulation 28; or</p> <p>is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home.</p> <p>If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of—</p> <p>the name of the person so appointed; and</p> <p>the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))</p>	<p>14 September 2023</p>
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p>	<p>14 September 2023</p>

the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;

the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;

so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and

the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that internal bedroom door sensors or alarms are not used unless carefully assessed alongside any specific safeguarding risks. This requirement has been restated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information in a non-stigmatising way and in a way that will be helpful for the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure there is a system in place to regularly reward children, celebrate positive behaviour and recognise when children have managed situations well. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.39)
- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review includes feedback from children, staff, parents, and placing authorities. This will enhance reports and provide evidence regarding children's experiences and the impact of these on their outcomes. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that independent regulation 44 reports are received by the regulator to ensure effective oversight of practice in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 1213828

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Inspire Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Inspire Children's Services, Unit 3, Craig Court,
Standish Street, St. Helens WA10 1GJ

Responsible individual: Paul Keogh

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jenni Gadsby, Social Care Inspector

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