

2654620

Registered provider: Montage Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for two children with emotional and social difficulties.

The home and the manager were registered with Ofsted in September 2021.

Two children have lived at the home at different times since the assurance inspection in November 2022. A child moved out in December 2022 and another in August 2023. The home was preparing to welcome another child at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 August 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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 1 August 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
17/11/2022	Assurance Inspection	No serious or widespread concerns
01/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/02/2022	Interim	Sustain effectiveness
15/12/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

During the times that children have lived at the home, all have made progress from their starting points. They were supported to develop skills to reflect on their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. This was aided by staff providing clear and consistent boundaries.

Staff have a collaborative approach to meeting children's needs. Communication with professionals and children's professional networks were very good. For example, leaders and managers had weekly network meetings with social workers and the child and adolescent mental health service. This has aided children in getting the help they need when they need it.

Staff worked very well with education providers to promote children's education. Although one child did not attend school, staff acted creatively and proactively to provide educational activities in the home and the community. For example, staff worked hard to prepare a child to sit their GCSE exam and waited with them to encourage them to remain in the exam room.

Children contribute to their own care plans, highlighting what is important to them. Staff listen to children's requests and enthusiastically involve them in activity and menu planning. Children take part in enjoyable experiences, which include swimming, cycling and visits to museums.

Children live in a safe environment. Extensive health and safety certificates confirm the safety of the home. In addition, staff carry out regular health and safety checks. The home is currently being renovated to prepare to welcome a new child.

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

Children build trusting relationships with staff. One child wrote to staff after they left and said, 'I am just writing this email to thank you and the whole of [name of service] for all the opportunities you have given me.'

Effective safeguarding practice protected the children and promoted their welfare. Strong communication and joint working with the children's social workers, mental health professionals and, at times, the police helped to reduce harm to the children.

Staff worked tirelessly and sensitively to protect children in the community and in the home from risks, such as self-harm, suicidal thoughts and being missing from home. Children's risks were known and understood by staff. Risk assessments clearly identified risks and included clear guidance to help staff to manage the risk.

Staff only physically restrain children as a last resort to safeguard them. However, records of restraint do not always include details of debriefs or accurately describe

conversations with children following the incident. This compromises management oversight of restraint practice and staff development.

Allegations and serious incidents are managed well. However, Ofsted was not notified of two allegations and several serious incidents requiring the involvement of the police or emergency services. This compromises the oversight of the regulator.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from effective leaders and managers and an experienced, compassionate and diverse staff team. The deputy manager helps to strengthen the management structure.

Children receive care from a consistent and competent staff team. Staff take pride in children's achievements, and they enjoy being a positive role model for them. Staff benefit from a wide range of training, reflective team meetings and clinical supervision. This has helped staff to deliver a consistent approach to children and improve the functioning of the team.

Formal supervision is variable in its quality and frequency. For example, a new staff member had one formal supervision session in three months. This compromises management oversight of their development and individual support needs.

The recruitment of staff is rigorous. Leaders and managers ensure that the staff recruited are suitable and there are no concerns about their ability to work with children.

Leaders and managers communicate daily and weekly with the professional network. However, written reports to the social worker have, at times, been delayed.

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 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 an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(c))</p>	12 September 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a))</p>	12 September 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that full and accurate records of restraint are kept, enabling the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline, and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly when any issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's record-keeping policies and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. This relates to having full and detailed records of staff debriefs and ensuring that written reports to the professional network are timely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2654620

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Montage Services Limited

Responsible individual: Anthony McKenzie

Registered manager: Liam McDermott

Inspector

Jayshree Pillay, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
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