

1234317

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

Assurance 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 who may experience social and emotional difficulties. Four children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2022.

Inspection date: 20 September 2023

Date of last inspection: 25 April 2023

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'.

This assurance inspection took place in response to concerns raised in safeguarding notifications and a complaint from a child who previously lived at the home. It has not replaced the assurance inspection that is due to take place following the last full

inspection. Therefore, the requirements made at the full inspection on 25 April 2023 have not been reviewed. These will be reviewed at a later date.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children's relationships with staff are generally positive. Staff take time to get to know the children and understand their individual risks and vulnerabilities. The effectiveness of this continues to fluctuate, with some children making good progress and others being drawn into unwanted risk-taking behaviour. This means that children sometimes move in and out of the home in quick succession, causing additional disruption in their lives.

After a child left the home recently, a complaint was received which raised serious concerns about the conduct and behaviour of staff. At this assurance inspection, it was demonstrated by the provider that these concerns were taken extremely seriously and are being investigated in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Leaders and managers acted and measures had been taken to ensure the well-being of the children.

Staff are clear in their understanding of whistle-blowing. They know what and when to report concerns and who they should report these to. This provides assurances that staff understand their responsibilities in making sure that children are treated with nurture and care and are safeguarded effectively.

Most of the children who live at this home live a long way from their home areas. The pull to be back on familiar territory and close to family and friends has seen an escalation in some children going missing, sometimes for several days at a time. Staff follow practice guidance. However, the distance some children travel impedes staff's ability to undertake daily searches for them and carry out welfare checks. This means that children's safety is being compromised and there is an overreliance on other agencies, such as the police, to locate some children when they go missing.

The manager ensures that there is frequent communication with professionals and strategy meetings take place regularly, particularly when children go missing. There is good multi-agency working to ensure a coordinated approach which provides some reassurance that children's safety and well-being are prioritised.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
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

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, The 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. Risk assessments and safety plans should be summarised in a way that makes it clear what staff should be vigilant about, including where there are new and emerging risks for children.</p>	30 June 2023

<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>	<p>30 June 2023</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 refers to ensuring that emerging risks are properly reflected in risk assessments and safety plans.</p>	<p>30 June 2023</p>
<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> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p>	<p>31 October 2023</p>

that arrangements are in place to—

ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;
manage and review the placement of each child in the home;

and 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.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to meet children'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 person should have expectations that standards of behaviour are high 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 Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

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

Responsible individual: Sharron Edwards

Registered manager: Sabur Khan

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

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