

# SC403789

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. It provides care for up to four children who may have a combination of mental health, psychological, emotional and complex care needs.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since March 2023. Two deputy managers have been overseeing the home. A new manager has been appointed and is currently going through safer recruitment processes.

**Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2023**

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** 14 June 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
14/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/09/2021	Full	Good
12/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/09/2019	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

Two children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. Three children have moved on from the home since the last full inspection. Two of these children had positive experiences of moving on from the home. One child's time at the home ended abruptly. Managers failed to plan for her move into the home effectively. Consequently, staff did not have the necessary skills, nor did they receive relevant training to enable them to meet her complex needs. This led to a further move for her, thereby creating more instability.

Staff and managers do not support children to have good, structured routines. During the inspection, both children were asleep in their bedrooms and did not get up until late in the afternoon. They were not encouraged to engage in any meaningful activities to help them make progress educationally, socially or to improve their independence skills.

Managers and staff do not adequately support children with their education. Poor communication with teachers means that teachers are not kept up to date about difficulties that may affect children in school. Consequently, the support that children need and receive is not well coordinated.

Children do not receive good help from staff to enable them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, staff and managers failed to support a child with his physical health needs, and in turn, this has negatively affected his emotional well-being. Neither of the children living at the home have received health assessments, and managers have failed to effectively challenge partner agencies when there has been drift and delay. As a result, staff do not know if the children have any outstanding health needs, and there are no up-to-date plans to help children improve their health.

Although some areas of the home are generally well maintained, others are not. For example, one child's bedroom had a strong, unpleasant smell that staff were not dealing with. The home requires some restorative decoration as there are dirty carpets, some walls need repainting and there are marks on the ceilings due to previous leaks. In addition, there are overgrown weeds almost covering the office and annex windows, as well as discarded cigarette butts in the garden. This does not create a homely and welcoming environment for children that they can take pride in.

Staff and managers have not consistently supported a child to develop good independent living skills to help him with his impending move. This has led to the child feeling anxious about and ill-prepared for his next steps.

Children have opportunities to express their wishes and feelings through key-work sessions and children's meetings. One child has access to an independent visitor. Children are involved in making decisions about some aspects of the day-to-day running of the home, but this does not go far enough.

Children have access to different leisure activities, such as going to the cinema, shopping, day trips and meals out. This gives children some positive experiences.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate**

Managers and staff do not always refer allegations made by children to the designated officer in line with statutory guidance. When allegations are referred, recommendations raised by the designated officer are not consistently actioned by managers. In addition, poor record-keeping means that there is no clear audit trail of what actions leaders, managers and staff have taken when concerns have been raised by children. This poor practice does not help to safeguard children and show them that their concerns are taken seriously.

Staff do not always respond promptly to safeguarding concerns. For example, when inappropriate content was found on a child's phone, relevant professionals were not notified for several days. This does not ensure a coordinated response to significant incidents that happen, and so leaves children at risk of continuing harm.

Managers and staff do not understand and manage risk well. Leaders and managers do not provide staff with some specialist training to help them to understand children's lived trauma. Consequently, staff struggled to manage one child's behaviour, which contributed to the child moving on from the home quickly.

Children do not receive good support to help them learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, staff have not been proactive in supporting one child to learn about healthy relationships, and this left the child vulnerable.

Staff and managers do not consistently use the home's rewards system to reinforce positive behaviours. This shortfall was identified by the independent visitor and remains unaddressed. Staff are failing to put consistent boundaries in place for children to enable them to learn what appropriate and inappropriate behaviours are.

The arrangements for handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines require improvement. Staff do not consistently sign children's records after medication is administered, and on some occasions, there was no evidence that medication was offered to children as needed. Managers did not know where records are kept of audits completed by an external auditor and the clinical nurse. Consequently, they did not know if there are any recommendations that require addressing.

Managers have recently reviewed the locality risk assessment. However, they did not consult partner agencies when compiling this assessment to ensure that it contains information about all current and known risks within the local area. This does not show good partnership working to help inform staff and children about

potential risks that children may face when they are out in their local community and how they can keep themselves safe from harm.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

A lack of clear management arrangements in recent months has affected the quality of care provided to children. A new manager has been appointed and is going through safer recruitment processes. A new responsible individual is in post, and she is beginning to develop an understanding of the needs of the service.

Managers, including senior managers, do not act on recommendations raised by the independent visitor following their monthly visits to the home. As a result, managers are not using feedback to develop the service and improve the poor quality of care being provided.

When managers are involved in restraint incidents, they review the incident records themselves. This does not allow for independent oversight to ensure that such incidents are handled appropriately and any learning is understood and acted on.

Staff have shown some resilience through a challenging period, though the accumulative effect of this has left them tired and demoralised. This has had an impact on the overall quality of care given to children.

Managers do not always notify Ofsted about significant events. This means that the regulator is not given relevant information to inform its monitoring of the service and assessment of whether staff respond appropriately when serious incidents occur.

Managers have failed to review and update the home's statement of purpose to reflect changes in management arrangements.

Staff are receiving regular supervision and support from the in-house clinical team. However, there is no review of input to staff from the clinical team to understand what, if any, impact this has on staff's practice and care of children.

Following this inspection, a restriction of accommodation has been issued and two compliance notices have been raised.

## 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>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult;</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities in order to live their 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. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(vi)(vii)(c)(i))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	12 November 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>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;</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	<p>12 November 2023</p>
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;</p> <p>help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(viii)(x))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that managers and staff provide children with good routines and constructive educational activity when they are not in school, to understand children’s academic progress, and link in with children’s teachers and placing authority to provide additional support as necessary.</p>	<p>12 November 2023</p>

<p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iv))</p>	<p>12 November 2023</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; and</p> <p>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>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	<p>12 December 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>12 December 2023</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>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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii))</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(b))</p> <p>This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.</p>	<p>12 December 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	<p>12 November 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>	<p>12 November 2023</p>

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that when establishing the home, it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulations 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home 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 these. (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:** SC403789

**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:** Rhian Hopkins

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector

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