

# 1240844

Registered provider: Your Chapter Holdings Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. The home provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There was one child living in the home at the time of the inspection.

There has been no registered manager since 30 August 2023. There is an interim manager in post, however, they have not applied to register with Ofsted.

The interim manager was on annual leave during the inspection and the responsible individual led the inspection.

### Inspection dates: 2 and 3 October 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 widespread failures that mean children and young people 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:** 19 October 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
19/10/2022	Full	Good
30/11/2021	Full	Good
29/10/2019	Full	Good
18/09/2018	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children's overall progress and experiences have been adversely affected by serious shortfalls in safeguarding practice and poor leadership and management of the home. Since the last inspection, one child has left the home and one child has remained living in the home.

Children's plans do not include all necessary information for staff to help children to reach their full potential. For example, leaders and managers do not ensure that children's plans include up-to-date information from placing authorities. This compromises children's overall progress and experiences because staff have limited guidance on how best to meet children's individual needs.

Leaders, managers and staff encourage children to engage with services to improve their health and emotional well-being. This includes mental health services and dental care. However, staff do not always ensure that children have access to specialist support in a timely way, for example, in relation to giving up smoking cigarettes.

On one occasion, children did not have enough food to eat. This meant that children's basic care needs were not met. This resulted in one child making a complaint. Records show that this was addressed appropriately by the manager after the event. However, this issue was not identified before the child made a complaint.

The home environment offers children space to relax. During the inspection, concerns were raised with the responsible individual about visible mould around the bath and the staff bedroom door not closing. Action was taken to rectify these matters.

Despite the shortfalls identified, children are attending education. The manager works with education providers to ensure children have access to suitable education provision. Staff support children to consider employment and education opportunities, to help children make informed decisions.

Children's recreational experiences are varied. Some children engage in activities and develop hobbies that are of interest to them. One child competes in mixed martial arts. Staff are proud of his achievements and attend events and competitions to support him.

Children are supported to spend time with friends and family. Staff check that children are safe when they are with their families and friends. However, children's plans do not have clear guidance about how to manage this in practice.

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

There are shortfalls in safeguarding practice that have compromised children's safety and overall well-being.

Leaders and managers do not understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Allegations are not managed well and leaders and managers have failed to undertake robust investigations in line with their own safeguarding policies and procedures. Furthermore, records of investigation do not provide a clear rationale for decision-making and actions taken as a result of an allegation are unclear. This leaves children exposed to potential harm.

When children are missing from home, staff do not provide a consistent response to ensure they return home safely. This leaves children vulnerable and at risk of harm when they are missing in the community. Furthermore, there is a lack of evaluation of the actions taken by staff. As a result, unsafe practice has continued.

Staff do not provide children with consistent boundaries. This does not help children feel safe or secure in the home. One child told the inspector, 'Staff had no time for me when [name of child] was here. I had no one to talk to and did not get to go on activities with staff.'

Staff do not provide children with clear boundaries and consequences for their behaviour. Records do not demonstrate what help and support are provided for children to help them understand and learn from any incidents.

Children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans do not include all their vulnerabilities, with actions for staff to follow in practice. As a result, effective action is not always taken to reduce the risk of harm to children.

The child said he has one member of staff who he trusts to talk to about any worries he may have. However, the child said that not all staff listen to him, and their actions do not always keep him safe.

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

There is no registered manager in post. The previous registered manager left the home in August 2023. This has impacted on stability in the home and led to serious shortfalls in leadership and management. Poor safeguarding practices have not been addressed with staff.

There is an interim manager in post, who is registered for another of the company's homes. Feedback during the inspection from the child and staff noted that there have been improvements in the home since the interim manager took over.

Leadership and management arrangements are poor and ineffective. Leaders and managers do not have effective monitoring systems in place to identify and respond

to the shortfalls in the care and safeguarding practice of staff in the home. Therefore, there is insufficient management oversight of the quality of care that staff provide for children.

Leaders and managers do not continually assess the risks to each child and review the strategies in place to protect them. There are shortfalls in the recording of significant events and the evaluation of the action taken. Poor practice has therefore continued, which does not promote children's safety and welfare.

Staff morale has been negatively affected by the poor leadership and management of the home. Some staff said they had not received support from the previous manager, including supervision or team meetings. The interim manager recognises this.

Children's case records are not updated. This is a missed opportunity to show children's journeys. Staff do not consistently sign and date records to demonstrate that they are aware of the content.

External monitoring and quality assurance visits to the home are not effective. The responsible individual was not aware of the concerns identified at the inspection, despite visiting the home. Poor monitoring systems do not enable action to be taken to address the shortfalls in care practices which leave children vulnerable.

Due to the serious and widespread failings identified at this inspection, compliance notices have been issued under section 22a of the Care Standards Act 2000. These relate to regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

## 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 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>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</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;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded;</p>	<p>26 November 2023</p>

<p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health; and</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(c)(d)(e))</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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</p>	<p>26 November 2023</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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))</p>	
<p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.</p> <p>In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that no child is subject to any reprisal for making a complaint or representation.</p> <p>The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that complaints and allegations made by children are investigated, recorded and responded to in a timely way.</p>	<p>6 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>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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p>	<p>6 December 2023</p>



<p>ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</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;</p> <p>that the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plans is requested, if—</p> <p>the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child’s needs;</p> <p>the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission; or</p> <p>that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)(e)(i)(ii)(f))</p> <p>Specifically, leaders and managers should ensure that staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge to meet children’s needs.</p>	
<p>The children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>ascertain and consider each child’s views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in</p>	<p>6 December 2023</p>

the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare;

help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;

help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child;

regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care;

help each child to understand how the child's privacy will be respected and the circumstances when it may have to be limited;

help each child to prepare for any review of the child's relevant plans and to make the child's views, wishes and feelings known for the purposes of that review; and

make each child aware of and, if necessary, remind them of each of the matters in sub-paragraph (d)(i) to (iii);

ensure that each child—

is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives;

has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home; and

is given appropriate advocacy support;

keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document;

ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about—

the children's guide;

how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with; and

<p>what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision; and</p> <p>ensure that the views of each relevant person are taken into account, so far as reasonably practicable, before making a decision about the care or welfare of a child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(iii)(e))</p> <p>Leaders and managers must ensure that children have access to the complaints procedure, including how to complain to Ofsted. The registered person must ensure that children's complaints are investigated and that children are supported to understand the outcome and reasons for this.</p> <p>Leaders and managers must ensure that staff consider children's wishes and feelings when making decisions and that these are balanced against what is in the child's best interests.</p>	
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2))</p> <p>Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that children have appropriate routines and boundaries, and that consequences and rewards are recorded to evidence how children are supported to learn from behaviours.</p>	6 December 2023
<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>	6 December 2023

<p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>Case records must be kept—</p> <p>in cases not falling within sub-paragraph (a), for 75 years from the child’s date of birth;</p> <p>securely in the children’s home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there; and</p> <p>in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)(d))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that children’s case records are up to date, signed and dated. The registered person must ensure that the child’s ethnicity and religion are clearly recorded. The registered person must ensure that children’s records are kept for the period specified once a child has moved out of the home.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that staff receive regular supervision, annual appraisals and ongoing training to meet the needs of the children.</p>	6 December 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p>	6 December 2023

to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.

A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.

The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—

children are effectively safeguarded; and

the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.

(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that the independent person provides suitable scrutiny and suggests actions to enable the home to identify shortfalls and safeguarding concerns.

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## 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:** 1240844

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Your Chapter Holdings Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Sharron Edwards

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Jenni Gadsby, Social Care Inspector

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