

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. The children may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2022. Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection date: 25 October 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following serious concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- Leaders and managers have failed to make effective arrangements to safeguard children.

Leaders and managers do not always effectively manage allegations. This leads to any concerns about staff conduct not being fully understood and addressed. A lack of action has meant that some allegations are not dealt with properly, and members of staff continue to work at this or another of the provider's homes. This leaves children exposed to risk of harm.

During the inspection, a child made an allegation of suffering physical and emotional harm from a member of staff. Previous similar allegations made by the child had not been dealt with in line with the company's policies and procedures. This does not show the child that their voice is heard, and managers are not assured that they have acted to prevent any ongoing risk to children.

Leaders and managers do not always share full information with the local authority designated officer (LADO). This prevents the LADO from understanding the gravity of allegations and therefore deciding on the correct course of action. New information relating to allegations is not always shared with the wider professional group, which prevents broader action being taken to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Action has not been taken by leaders and managers to address previous requirements regarding incidents between children. The seriousness of such incidents has increased. Leaders and managers have failed to act to reduce unwanted peer-on-peer behaviours between children, such as bullying. These unaddressed behaviours have left children at risk.

Relationships between children have not been managed effectively. This has resulted in children arranging and planning unwanted behaviours, such as going missing from the home. Staff have failed to prevent children obtaining dangerous items. Room searches are not effectively carried out. Items have subsequently been recovered that could put children and staff at significant risk of harm.

The premises are not in keeping with regulations. Fire extinguishers have been removed from the communal areas and put in the staff office and are not as easily accessible as they should be. Staff said that this is common practice to stop children from tampering with them. This puts everyone in the building at risk in the event of an emergency. Some areas of the premises were in a poor state of cleanliness; this does not make the children feel that they are cared for.

Staff work with other agencies to agree plans for when children are missing. For one child, the plan restricts staff from contacting people who may know the child's whereabouts. This prevents staff from being able to check that the child is in a known location.

The use of unfamiliar agency staff to look for children limits the likely success of searches of the local area. The registered manager said that other professionals do not always support staff to safeguard children. However, this has not been sufficiently escalated to achieve a different response from these professionals.

Leaders and managers have not always notified the regulator when child protection enquiries have started or ended. This limits the regulator's ability to have oversight to ensure that all necessary actions to keep children safe have been completed.

Due to the lack of progress in the shortfalls raised at the full inspection, all requirements raised will be restated.

Some of the newly identified concerns are so serious that the home has been issued a compliance notice under regulation 12, the protection of children standard. In addition, a restriction of accommodation notice has also been issued, which prevents any more children moving in to the home. This enforcement action will be reviewed according to Ofsted's processes to evaluate whether measures put in place have reduced the identified risks.

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>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</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 designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iv)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)(e))</p>	10 December 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>	10 December 2023

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— 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>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 are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	<p>10 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 arrangements are in place to—</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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))</p>	<p>10 December 2023</p>

* This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to meet the child'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)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Your Chapter Limited

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

Responsible individual: Bokani Nyoni-Chaya

Registered manager: Sabur Khan

Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Inspector

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