

2729647

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private company and provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities. Four children were living at the home at the time of inspection.

A manager has been in post since May 2024 and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious incident that occurred at the setting since the last inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 20 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/09/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home. The children were all present and spoken with during the inspection.

This inspection was brought forward in order to address specific concerns received by Ofsted. A serious incident indicates poor staff practice and a failure to safeguard children. The management of this incident has led to the judgement that how well children are helped and protected and the leadership and management require improvement to be good. This has reduced the overall judgement.

One child moved out of the home in an unplanned way. The manager made the decision based on the risks posed to the other children. However, the manager has not undertaken a review of the way that this child's placement ended. This child's end to living at the home. This shows that potential learning has not always identified.

One child is currently planning to move back to foster care. Staff are supporting the child to build a relationship with their new carers. Four children have moved into the home since the last inspection. Children's moves to the home are managed well. The children living there are given an opportunity to express their views about a new child moving in. The manager arranges for all the social workers to attend a meeting to discuss potential children to ensure the decision is positive for all of the children.

Staff support children's education. One child had been out of education for two years before moving to the home. The child has recently taken end-of-school exams. Another child is attending a local mainstream school after a gap in education. Two of the children are not in school. Home tutoring is being arranged. A school place is being sought for one of the children. When children are not in school, staff provide some educational activities. These include gardening, budgeting, cooking and worksheets. This helps children to maintain daily routines until a school place is identified.

The house is large, welcoming and well appointed. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their liking. The children are asked for their views about the decor of the home.

Staff support children's interests. Children take part in a range of activities, including visits to theme parks, shopping and water fights. One child had an incentive chart to earn a trip to a horse-racing event. Children have been supported to volunteer at a local horse stables.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

An incident involving three members of staff remains under investigation. Children witnessed this incident. Serious concerns about a staff member's conduct were not reported by the two staff present at this incident. This meant that a staff member continued working at the home for two days following the incident. A child highlighted this incident to a manager using footage captured on a mobile phone. This was then confirmed by the other staff. Despite two of the staff witnessing the incident and a telephone call to the manager during the incident, it was a child who made the manager fully aware. The failure to report this did not safeguard children. Once the manager was aware, they took the appropriate actions and informed the local authority designated officer (LADO) and Ofsted.

A separate concern about a staff member was not reported appropriately. This was about a waking night staff member falling asleep. This was not reported to the LADO or Ofsted. The member of staff no longer works at the home. This lack of reporting means the oversight of concerns is reduced. Other concerns have been notified to the LADO and Ofsted appropriately.

Restraints are used when necessary and proportionate. Debriefs are undertaken with children and staff; however, these are not dated and nor is the manager's oversight. One restraint did not have any manager's review. This means that the manager cannot identify learning from restraints or identify patterns or trends.

There are few missing-from-home incidents. This is an improvement for children, as some had high levels of missing-from-home incidents before moving to the home. Staff understand the actions to take if a child leaves the home without agreement. Staff implement children's court orders and understand their responsibilities to follow these to keep children safe.

Safer recruitment is followed for new members of staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The previous registered manager left in April 2024 but continues working for the company. The deputy manager was appointed as the manager and started in the role in May 2024.

During a serious incident, the staff called the manager. The children were distressed and unsettled; however, the manager failed to explore how this incident was managed. He did not become fully aware of the details until three days later, when he was informed by a child. This lack of curiosity means that children could have been at risk, uneasy and frightened while a staff member continued to work over the two days.

The manager has some oversight of incidents. He evaluates the incidents and identifies any lessons learned. However, his comments are not dated. This means it is not possible to tell whether the manager is reviewing incidents and identifying learning promptly.

The manager and deputy manager provide supervision sessions. These are not always provided in response to incidents. Neither have attended any training in supervision since working at the home. This could mean that staff are not receiving good-quality or reflective supervision. Staff supervision sessions and team meetings take place regularly.

Staff receive appraisals of their performance. These do not include feedback from professionals, colleagues or children as part of their appraisal. This reduces opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for development.

The manager understands the areas that require development. The staff are positive about the manager and the support that he provides. Professionals provided positive feedback about the support given by the staff and manager.

There is a stable staff team. Staff from the wider company cover any gaps in the rota. This prevents temporary staff from being used. Being cared for by known staff provides children with stability.

Staff receive regular training. The training is relevant to the children's needs. A new training system includes courses that staff can access to improve their skills and knowledge in relation to risk. Managers monitor when staff have undertaken training to ensure this is done within timescales.

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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vii))</p> <p>In particular—</p> <p>ensure that the staff understand and follow the home’s safeguarding procedures;</p> <p>ensure that staff make appropriate referrals when there is an allegation of abuse.</p>	<p>9 August 2024</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>9 August 2024</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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; and</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)(c)(f)(h))</p> <p>In particular—</p> <p>ensure that staff receive the appropriate managerial support when using the on-call system that means children are protected and kept safe;</p> <p>ensure that staff are supported to reflect and learn following incidents;</p> <p>ensure that the manager reviews unplanned endings for children to identify any learning.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure;</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	9 August 2024
<p>The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which—</p>	9 September 2024

are signed and dated by the author of each entry.
(Regulation 36 (1)(c))

In particular, ensure that the manager has signed and dated managerial reviews following incidents.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, when reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that notifications to Ofsted are made if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: 2729647

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Trust Care Management Ltd, 319b, Walton Road, West Molesey KT8 2QG

Responsible individual: Zameer Chaudhry

Registered manager: Matthew Wood

Inspector

Leanne Lyon, Social Care Inspector

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