

2523034

Registered provider: Moonreach Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home can provide care for up to three children with social and emotional needs. It is operated by a private company, which has other similar homes in the area. There were three children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

There has not been a registered manager in the home since 20 May 2024.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

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: 31 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2023	Full	Good
14/12/2022	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Good
11/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last full inspection, children have not moved into, or out of, the home. There have been two changes in leadership, and a lack of stability in the staff team due to staff leaving, joining, and moving across to this home from other children's homes operated by this provider.

Staff are struggling to meet the needs of one child. This has seen an increase in serious incidents, resulting, on occasion, in staff calling emergency services for assistance. New staff coming into the home are struggling to build positive relationships with children and this, at times, creates an unsettled and disruptive environment. Children report feeling sad due to the frequent changes in staffing.

Senior managers have given notice for one child to leave the home as they feel unable to meet their needs. The responsible individual is actively working with the child's placing authority to find an alternative and suitable provision for the child to move to in a planned way.

Most children, despite the challenges faced, are continuing to maintain positive progress in important areas of their lives. This is because there are some core staff who are providing consistency to children and have built positive relationships. For example, children are attending their school provisions, developing their independence skills and enjoying shared time with familiar staff who support them to pursue their likes and interests. Two children have recently enjoyed planned holidays with staff.

Staff listen to children and provide support to help children feel happier and healthier. Staff speak to children about who is important to them and how they can promote and understand these relationships better. For one child, this has seen an increase in family time, and for another child, this is helping them to feel a sense of permanency and belonging. As a result, one child is spending less time away from the home.

Detailed care plans guide staff with specific tasks and actions to help develop children's key skills. Children's achievements are well documented, and staff celebrate children's successes in meaningful ways, such as enjoying a meal together or going on a planned trip. This gives children a sense of accomplishment and boosts their self-esteem.

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

In July 2024, senior managers did not appropriately respond to the welfare needs of one child. This meant that a serious safeguarding concern was identified by an external healthcare professional. The lack of professional curiosity, staff's understanding of reporting procedures, and on occasion, management on-call advice and availability have

caused unnecessary delays in safeguarding professionals being notified in a timely manner. This had the potential to hinder safe working practices.

Staff are struggling to maintain consistent boundaries with children. The inconsistencies in staff practice and relationships with children mean that staff do not always follow children's plans and expectations of agreed rules and responsibilities; for example, supporting children to hand in their electronic Wi-Fi-enabled devices in line with their relevant plans.

Staff speak to children appropriately about potential risks and dangers of using the internet. Children are clear on the measures they should take to protect themselves and often report any concerns to staff immediately. This is helping children spot safety concerns, meaning staff can take effective action in exploring, reporting and helping children navigate the internet more safely.

Staff have good reflective conversations with children to help them think about their actions and how they can repair situations. For example, staff helped one child write an apology letter to another child. This is helping children to develop a greater understanding of responsibility and to learn from mistakes.

The previous registered manager has devised good risk assessments that include strategies for staff to follow in keeping children safe. These are regularly reviewed by senior managers and updated with key events and new approaches. This helps to keep staff well informed and demonstrates effective oversight of known and emerging risks for children.

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

Senior managers were unable to demonstrate how the newly appointed manager in May 2024 was appropriately inducted into the home. The manager's training and reading of policies and procedures were not centrally monitored, meaning supervision sessions were not individually targeted and reflective of the manager's induction, gaps in skills and development needs. This is a missed opportunity for leaders to demonstrate that the new manager had the skills, experience and training to underpin their practice and decision-making in the home.

Since the last full inspection, the registered manager has stepped down into a deputy manager's position in another children's home operated by this provider.

A new manager was appointed and has since stepped down from their managerial position. A new deputy manager has been promoted, and is acting up as the home's manager while senior leaders actively recruit a new permanent manager. The newly appointed deputy manager is experienced, and is being supported and supervised by the responsible individual and an area manager.

The changes in management have brought instability and inconsistencies in oversight of staff practice and development. The lack of monitoring of targets, training and practice-led outcomes for staff means leaders were unable to demonstrate how they support staff to develop their practice and relationships with children.

Staff training focuses on meeting the individual needs of children and in keeping them safe. New staff benefit from a structured induction that helps them to settle into their new role confidently. One new member of staff said: 'I have been made to feel very welcome. There is a variety of training and supportive learning opportunities.'

Safer recruitment practices are good and evidence a commitment from managers to requesting, obtaining and verifying references for prospective staff from all relevant previous employers.

Staff spoken to as part of this inspection say they feel fully supported by the responsible individual and area manager. They welcome the new deputy manager in the home and hope this brings permanency and stability for both children and staff.

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>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)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	<p>23 November 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>23 November 2024</p>

<p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home; and</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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)(f))</p>	
<p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children’s home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))</p>	23 November 2024
<p>The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction and undertakes appropriate professional development. (Regulation 33 (1)(a) (4)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the home’s manager is supported and supervised to learn and develop.</p>	23 November 2024

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: 2523034

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Moonreach Ltd

Registered provider address: 4 Dane John Works, Gordon Road, Canterbury CT1 3PP

Responsible individual: Fern Cowie

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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