

1236450

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run. It provides a specialist service for children and young people, irrespective of gender, who present with autistic spectrum disorder and/or other complex needs. The home can also provide care to children and young people who may have learning and/or emotional needs. It can accommodate up to five children or young people from the age of six to 18 years. All placements are subject to a needs and compatibility assessment. Each child or young person is respected and valued as an individual. The planning for care is individually tailored to address the specific and changing needs of the individual.

The registered manager has been in post since the home opened in July 2016.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 December 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
---	--------------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
---	-------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
---	-------------

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 13 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/06/2017	Full	Outstanding
08/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people living at this home are flourishing. The home radiates warmth, love and a sense of belonging. This is because the children and young people have grown up in the care of the same staff team throughout their time in placement. The children and young people have developed strong attachments with staff who understand their complex needs and how to manage them.

Staff recognise each child's and young person's individual personalities and characteristics and how this impacts on their behaviour. Staff share their knowledge and work very closely with professionals, parents and specialist services. Working closely together has ensured that the children and young people receive consistency in their care in whatever setting they are in. A social worker commented: 'It is an excellent home and I have no issues at all. [Name of child] has a fantastic relationship with staff and views this as his home. Staff are very good at communication and sharing information.'

All the children and young people living at the home enjoy life and are happy. This is because they have a voice about how they want to be looked after. Their wishes and feelings, likes and dislikes play an important role in their day-to-day care. The children and young people have choices in what they want to do and the activities they wish to participate in. Highly individualised communication methods are used to achieve this and their care plans are translated into widgets. Children and young people have enjoyed outings to Go Ape, wildlife parks, going swimming, and they thoroughly enjoyed a holiday at Disneyland Paris.

Staff make it possible for the children and young people to embrace life and ensure that they have equal opportunities, are socially accepted and included in society. All the children and young people attend school or receive some form of education provision. They have made exceptional and sustained progress relative to their learning needs. One child is the first student to have graduated from school with a diploma plus. The manager and staff work consistently with local authorities and education providers to ensure that the correct services are identified.

Young people are supported in their move to adult care. The home seeks and identifies appropriate accommodation in collaboration with the local authority and undertakes visits and supports the young person in all aspects of their transition. 'There is no "one size fits all",' said the manager. 'Transition plans have to reflect the needs of the child.' A parent said: 'We have come to the point where [name of child] has to move on. The dedication above and beyond is obvious to see and the personal touches have made his transition the best he could ever have had.'

Children and young people make exceptional progress which is sustained. One child has come off all controlled medication and is able to self-regulate his behaviour, and another child now takes his medication orally. Communication for all the children has noticeably improved. The inspector was greeted with one child, who said: 'I want a Christmas tree, ho, ho, ho!' His parent said: 'I never thought I would hear my child speak, it is amazing

that he now uses words and sentences.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

The children and young people have well-documented and highly individualised risk assessments and care management plans to meet their generic and individual needs. All plans and living records are updated regularly and reflect their changing needs.

The manager and staff fully understand the vulnerabilities of the children in their care. They work alongside agencies to ensure that the children and young people are safe and well-looked after, whether they are at school, on contact, or out and about in the community. This is giving the children and young people a better quality of life.

Children and young people feel safe, and this can be seen through their behaviour and interactions with staff. Staff understand risk and how this impacts on children and young people, and they can identify when a child is in pain or unwell due to the strength of their relationships. This has helped the children and young people to feel safe and secure in their environment.

Risk assessments and care management plans clearly document triggers for the child or young person and how these should be managed and circumvented. This has helped to prevent and reduce heightened anxieties, as they rarely happen. Physical intervention is extremely rare and occurred only once since the last inspection. Professionals recognise the benefits to the child or young person due to consistent boundaries and care.

Children and young people living at the home are not at high risk of radicalisation, exploitation or being missing from care. Staff know their duties to safeguard the children and young people, and the home has clear policies and procedures in place.

The physical environment is well maintained and safe for the children and young people to have freedom of movement. There is an abundance of safe outdoor equipment set in rural surroundings for the children and young people to enjoy. Appropriate staffing ratios ensure that the children and young people are safe and supervised appropriately.

Records viewed, practice observed, and discussions held presented an overwhelming picture of carefully managed and considered risk. Good matching processes are in place, including introductions to the home, with ample staff who give the children and young people one-to-one supervision.

Staff training is continuous and far reaching. The specialised needs of the children and young people are underpinned by training and access to research. Safe recruitment processes ensure that, when there is a need to recruit more staff, appropriately skilled and experienced staff are employed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

There is a highly motivated and efficient management team in place. Practice is consistent, innovative and tailored to the individual. As a result, children and young people make measurable and sustained progress in all aspects of their lives. The manager wants all the children and young people in her care to be able to achieve to the

best of their ability, have the best possible outcomes and to move forward into supported adult life successfully.

The manager has a highly empathic understanding of the children and young people for whom she is responsible for due to being very 'hands on'. Her approach undoubtedly 'rubs off' on the staff and the manager is an aspirational role model. She disseminates learning and research as part of an ongoing process, and discussions around the children and young people are at the core of their progress and achievements.

The manager and staff are confident in challenging partner agencies and professionals if they think that the child's or young person's best interests are not being addressed or that decision-making is not given priority. For example, the manager escalated concerns until she was satisfied the transition plans for one child were undertaken at his pace.

Staff commented on being fully supported and describe the home has being like a large family. The atmosphere is lively, busy and nurturing for the children and young people which gives them a sense of belonging. The longevity and stability of the staff team is testament to the management support and positive ethos that the manager embeds. Staff say that they enjoy being at work.

There are always more staff than children and young people in the home. This creates a safe environment and the children and young people always have someone to go to or be with. The children and young people can engage in individual activities of their choosing.

Training is up to date and any additional training to meet specific needs for the children and young people is completed. The manager has a clear development plan that recognises that working with children and young people is an ever-changing environment and there is always room for improvement.

The manager has good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the service. Internal and external reports provide a reflective and evaluative overview of the home. Feedback questionnaires are routinely sent out to professionals and parents every six months and children and young people are supported to complete feedback in widget form.

Progress is unequivocally promoted, staff work intuitively with the children and young people, drawing on their skills, talents and attributes. The staff work through challenges to allow the children and young people to do the best that they can. Children and young people continue to do extremely well, and their transition and future opportunities are enhanced due to the progress made at this home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is

making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1236450

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Registered provider address: CareTech Community Services Limited, 5th Floor
Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Roberta Davies

Registered manager: Amira Wilson

Inspector

Cath Sikakana: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019