

1245823

Registered provider: Caretech Community Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. The home is registered to provide care for up to six children with physical and learning disabilities.

A suitably experienced registered manager manages the home. She has been registered with Ofsted since November 2022.

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 6 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2022	Full	Good
22/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/12/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are four children living in the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home and no children have moved out. The transition for the child who moved in was managed well. The child visited before moving in and met the staff and other children living in the home. This helped the child to quickly settle in.

Children who live here are settled and happy. They spoke fondly of the staff and said they liked their home. One child said, 'Staff make sure I am happy.' Interactions between staff and children were warm, reciprocal and natural.

Staff support children to access appropriate education to meet their needs. All children are in full-time education and their attendance is good. Staff communicate regularly with education providers and parents to share education information and children's progress and achievements. This helps children to reach their goals.

Staff encourage children to have their say, using children's preferred methods of communication. For example, one child has a resource pack of picture communication aids. All the staff carry the same pack with them. This helps the child to communicate their wishes and feelings effectively to staff.

Children enjoy spending time with staff. They go for walks in the park, enjoy visiting sensory play centres and go on fun camping trips, which have widened their experiences. Children go swimming for fun, which has helped to build their confidence in the water. Staff take a risk-aware approach to support children to spend risk-assessed time in the community, which further enhances their experiences.

Overall, children enjoy good health and are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles. However, one child is not up to date with their optician appointment.

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

Staff understand children's complex needs and vulnerabilities and can identify potential new risks. Children do not go missing from home. However, staff know what action they should take if a child were to go missing.

Staff are committed to supporting children to experience positive emotional well-being. As a result, self-harm incidents have significantly reduced. When a child self-harms, staff take effective action to ensure their safety. The manager and staff access additional resources to enhance their knowledge and awareness to better support the child to use more positive coping strategies to manage their emotions.

Staff manage children's behaviours well. Physical restraint is used as a last resort, after staff have exhausted all de-escalation techniques. The manager has oversight

of all incidents and holds debriefs with staff and children. In addition to this, staff help children to reflect on the incident. This gives children the opportunity to discuss how they are feeling.

All allegations and complaints are taken seriously. The manager takes immediate action and ensures that information is communicated to external professionals without delay. Staff spend time with children in key-work sessions, helping them understand what they can do to stay safe. These processes help the children feel confident to report their concerns and know that they are taken seriously.

Children are helped to understand their behaviours and successes. Each child has a positive behaviour chart. Each day, staff record what the child has done well. At the end of each week, children's achievements are celebrated with rewards. Children can purchase a small toy or enjoy a reward activity. As a result, children's positive behaviour is reinforced through restorative practice and praise.

Children's medication is appropriately stored. However, children's plans do not detail who is responsible for administering their medication when they are away from the home. For example, medication plans do not record that school staff are responsible for medication administration during school hours. The manager acknowledged this shortfall in recording, and this information was added to the plans during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A dedicated manager leads this home. She speaks highly about the children, demonstrating a genuine commitment to meeting their needs. She is supported by a deputy manager who is keen to learn and develop. This ensures that children receive the best care.

The home is staffed by a stable and consistent staff team. Staff say morale is always high, that all the staff get on well with each other and they are open to each other's ideas. One member of staff said, 'This is a loving home and I'm honoured to be a part of such an amazing home.' This culture promotes healthy working relationships.

The manager ensures that staff are supported to undertake their roles effectively. Staff have completed a variety of relevant training to meet the children's needs, including their individual communication needs. Consequently, staff have the knowledge and skills to provide good-quality care to the children.

Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal, which helps them to remain skilled and supported in their professional development. The manager is supported well by the home's responsible individual. This demonstrates positive relationships between the leadership team and staff.

The manager is effective in improving staff practice. During the inspection, staff did not check the inspector's identification badge. The manager addressed this shortfall immediately, when she reminded staff of the organisation's internal procedures for

visitors entering the home. This shows poor practice does not go unnoticed and is challenged by the manager. This provides reassurance that errors are addressed straight away.

Not all staff with more than two years employment in residential care have a level 3 qualification. This means staff have failed to meet the regulatory timescales in obtaining their qualification.

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
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (5)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that staff gain the required qualification within the required timescales.	30 November 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure the home has a key role in organising and ensuring each child's attendance at the necessary health services. In particular, the manager should ensure optician appointments are arranged for all the children in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.11)

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: 1245823

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Caretech Community Services Limited

Registered provider address: Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar
EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Chloe Holt

Inspector

Jas Nahar, Social Care Inspector

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