

1249115

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. The home provides medium-term to long-term therapeutic care and support to children and young people who have suffered childhood sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation. The children and young people may also have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The home offers placements for a maximum of four female children or young people aged between 11 and 17 years.

Visit dates: 15 to 16 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 21 May 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Improved effectiveness

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children and young people like living at the home. They feel listened to, and their opinion is respected. One young person said, 'Staff are there for you, they listen, they don't judge and they help you.'

Staff have trusting relationships with children and young people and an in-depth therapeutic awareness of their needs. As a result, children and young people make excellent progress with their emotional and physical health.

All children and young people have kept in touch with their family during the pandemic. Staff have used various technologies to enable this to occur despite the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown. Where appropriate, staff have supported children and young people to meet with family face to face once local restrictions eased.

The home is decorated to a high standard. The staff have created a calm and homely environment for children and young people to live in. The children and young people's art work is visible around the home. Bedrooms are decorated with pictures of family and friends. There is a spacious lounge and a large kitchen and dining area where everyone eats together. Children and young people have their own space where they can relax.

All children and young people attend the on-site school and are making progress with their learning. They have been supported well by staff and the therapeutic team with their daily education routine. As a result, children and young people continue to make good educational progress.

The children and young people have a consistent daily routine. The home is well resourced, and children and young people take part in a wide variety of activities. Staff always consider the emotional and physical needs of the children and young people to enable the activities to occur. This means that the children and young people can take part in new experiences, learn new skills and have fun.

The manager and staff are supportive role models and provide good care to the children and young people. One social worker said, 'Staff are incredibly child focused. The therapeutic care the home provides is a massive part of why my young person has made such progress.'

The safety of children

Where children and young people have complex behaviours, these are clearly understood by staff. The manager and staff are skilled at identifying the triggers to

negative behaviours and respond appropriately. As a result, children and young people are settled and feel secure in the knowledge that staff understand them.

Children and young people review their safety plans with staff and are supported to talk about their emotional health needs. As a result, risk-taking behaviour is reducing as children and young people develop safer coping strategies. One young person proudly said, 'They saved my life,' when asked about the support staff provide.

Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place when children and young people go missing from home. On the occasions when this has occurred, staff implement agreed procedures and take effective action to ensure children and young people's safe return. Records relating to missing-from-home episodes are monitored, fully considered and reviewed by the registered manager. This ensures that any emerging patterns are quickly identified and address. This helps to reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Staff respond effectively to children and young people's emotional health needs. Staff help the children and young people to talk about their feelings and emotions during individual sessions and everyday discussions. As a result, children and young people know that staff are there for them if they feel unsettled.

The staff team receives good support from the in-house clinical team. This working partnership provides children and young people with therapeutically informed care.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager provides strong leadership and support to the staff team. She provides staff with clear purpose and direction that challenge them to improve the life chances, experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

Staff are very well supported and encouraged to develop their expertise through good-quality training relevant to the needs of the children and young people. Staff make the most of their training opportunities and use their learning to improve the effectiveness of how they support the children and young people.

The manager and staff regularly discuss and reflect on the care needs of the children and young people, what works, and what needs to change. This means that the care provided to the children and young people is constantly responsive to their daily needs.

Planning for children and young people referred to the home is well thought out. The manager meets with the child or young person before moving in, and those already living in the home are involved in the preparations to welcome the new arrival. However, impact risk assessments lack strategies for monitoring children and young people when there is an identified risk, of, for example, self-harm or child sexual exploitation. This could potentially result in inconsistencies in staff practice in safeguarding children and young people effectively.

The manager has effective relationships with other agencies. These include the police and social workers. Communication and planning have continued for children and young people through virtual meetings and, when they are face to face, with social distancing. This has enabled agencies such as the police to support the staff to keep children and young people safe.

The manager knows what the home does well. She makes good use of a range of quality assurance processes to ensure that all aspects of the home's performance and children and young people's progress are routinely monitored. External monitoring is also used effectively. This ensures that the high standards of care practice are maintained.

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, 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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(a)) This particularly refers to ensuring that all risks are evaluated when matching new children to those already living at the home.	01/12/2020

Recommendations

- All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of individual children's needs, be properly recorded and kept under review. The registered person should consider adding to risk assessments to give clearer direction to the reader. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1249115

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Amy Moulton

Registered manager: Leighonie Parlour

Inspectors

Aaron Mcloughlin, Social Care Inspector
Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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