

1268886

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties. The home follows a therapeutic community model of practice. The provider owns two other children's homes and is part of a commissioning partnership contract with eight local authorities.

The home registered with Ofsted in May 2018. The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2020 and is suitably qualified.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. The inspectors spoke with all the children and also held a discussion with a child who has recently left.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 September 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 26 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2022	Full	Good
09/10/2019	Full	Good
20/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are thriving in a nurturing, therapeutic-based, family-style environment. Children have been living at the home for over a year, and they have a good sense of stability and belonging. A child scored the home as '10 out of 10' and highlighted how staff have 'motivated' them. A social worker described how their child has made 'amazing progress' and said that the home 'goes way and beyond to support and encourage' children.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which offer them new life experiences, such as going on holiday. Children have a strong voice in this home. They influence their choice of key worker, individual incentives, the home's decor, activity and menu planning, and staff recruitment. Children can also keep pets.

Children become more confident and caring. They are encouraged to be themselves and develop their gender and sexual identity. Staff demonstrate an active commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, which helps children to develop their identity. Staff support children's religion, and children take pride in their cultural heritage.

All children are enrolled in school or college. This is commendable for some children, who have overcome barriers to attending education. Staff provide a significant level of support with educational attendance, which includes escorting children, collecting them, and staying with them, if needed. Staff do not always provide suitable activities when children are not attending school.

Staff support older children to achieve their goals, which includes facilitating mock interviews, applying for their national insurance number and provisional driving licence. Children are developing some basic independent living skills, such as doing their laundry, cleaning their rooms and baking. There is not a structured approach to helping older children to learn the skills they need for adult life.

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

Children confirm that they feel safe at the home. One of the home's strengths is the trusting relationships that children develop with staff, which enables children to discuss their anxieties. Staff have a good understanding of children's trauma. Since living at the home, there has been a significant improvement in the children's emotional well-being.

Children are calmer and they are learning to reflect and manage their feelings. Children learn to accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions and they receive meaningful rewards for positive behaviour. Leaders and managers also award certificates in recognition of children's achievements.

Staff educate children on their vulnerability and personal safety. When children are away from the home, staff make welfare calls to ensure that they are safe. Staff identify, understand and manage risks to children. Where there are concerns, leaders and managers actively involve the professional network, to safeguard the child.

On children's admission to the home, staff provide each child with their own fleeced blanket, which provides them with sensory comfort. A relative highlighted that their child is 'happier'. Children know how to make a complaint and their grievances are appropriately managed. Staff advocate for children when they raise complaints about other professionals' practice. An example is treatment by the police.

Staff have access to a wide range of safeguarding training. Allegations are managed appropriately. Some minor shortfalls were identified in record-keeping. For example, the fire drills record does not include the duration of the evacuations, and the complaints record does not include the dates when complaints are concluded.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from experienced, compassionate and forward-thinking managers. Managers lead a committed and culturally diverse staff team. A social worker stated that they are very pleased with the support and care and would recommend this home for other children.

There is a clear vision for the service, which relates to developing its accreditation as a unique therapeutic community. A source of pride has been helping an older child to successfully move to semi-independent living. Staff are providing an outreach service to this child, to help with their transition to independent life.

Staff enjoy making a positive difference to children's lives. Staff have regular individual supervision sessions, team meetings, therapeutic support and annual appraisals. The additional support from a psychotherapist ensures that there is meaningful reflection on the home's ways of working.

Leaders and managers embrace the digital age, for example by capturing the children's activities in social media videos.

The requirements and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met. Leaders and managers are aware of the service's strengths and the areas for development. There is a recognition of the need to upskill staff, which includes providing further training in relation to gender and sexuality, autism spectrum disorder and mental health.

Staff are ambitious for children and enthusiastic to improve outcomes for them. There are a range of monitoring arrangements, which includes regular audits. A local authority quality assurance officer described the system used to measure children's outcomes as 'very innovative'. The only shortfall is that the quality of care review does not include parents' opinions.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, provide training in relation to gender and sexuality, autism spectrum disorder and mental health.	31 December 2022
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;	31 October 2022

promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(viii))	
The system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of parents. (Regulation 45 (5))	31 October 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, this refers to recording the duration of fire drills and the outcome date of complaints. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child is moving to live independently, staff support them to develop emotional and mental resilience and practical skills. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

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: 1268886

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Home Limited

Registered provider address: 3 More London Place, Riverside, London SE1 2RE

Responsible individual: Paul Carr

Registered manager: Jacqueline Coombs

Inspectors

Sharon Payne, Social Care Inspector

Zara Salim, 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 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022