

2523027

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to six children. The statement of purpose states that the home caters for the needs of young people between the ages of eight and 17. It aims to create a warm, caring environment that is safe and supportive, enabling children to recover from past life experiences and grow to achieve their full potential.

Visit dates: 12 to 13 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 23 July 2020

Previous inspection judgement: No judgement given

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

The children have positive experiences moving into the home. The staff make the children feel welcome and take the time to build trusting relationships with them. The staff give the children different options of bedrooms to move into and encourage them to decorate their space to their liking. One child said that since moving into the home, the staff have helped them to continue their passion for creative cooking.

The staff welcome and encourage the views and opinions of the children. The children can attend weekly home meetings if they wish, so that they can share their ideas. Additionally, the staff place great emphasis on regular one-to-ones with the children so that more sensitive matters can be explored privately and at a time suited to the children's needs.

The children's education during the COVID-19 pandemic has been promoted effectively. Continuity has been maintained where possible, with the staff supporting the children to complete home schooling. One child has recently had an interview for a childcare apprenticeship course and told the inspector, 'I like helping children.' This demonstrates the staff's abilities and commitment in finding a trade or profession suited to the interest of the child.

The safety of children

The children are aware of how COVID-19 has had an impact on their lives and the wider world. The staff have sensitively educated the children as to why the restrictions are in place and the importance of keeping themselves, and others, safe. As a result, the children have understood and accepted why these measures are necessary.

The staff skilfully manage the sometimes complex emotional and behavioural needs of the children. They demonstrate a commitment to supporting the children when they struggle to cope. The staff act quickly and proportionately to keep children safe.

The staff demonstrate a good understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities of the children in their care. They also recognise and understand their own safeguarding roles and responsibilities and can readily identify key external agencies that work together to keep children safe. Because of recent improvements in this regard, the previous requirement has been met.

The staff store the children's medication appropriately, and the recording by staff of administering children's medications is mostly accurate and clear. However, some shortfalls in the staff's processes for recording and disposing of medicines received into the home are noted. This omission has not resulted in harm, but it does pose avoidable risks.

Leaders and managers

The leadership and management in this home has changed in recent weeks. The children and the staff welcome a new manager who, until recently, was the registered manager of a sister home. The new manager has made an application to register with Ofsted. On the day of the inspection, the new manager was not available and, therefore, the head of care, who is also the previous registered manager, supported this inspection.

Senior leaders have recently appointed a new assistant manager. The assistant manager has been working in the home as a team leader since the home opened in July 2019. The assistant manager is diligent, and clear on how the staff team supports the children to achieve their targets, goals and aspirations. The assistant manager is receiving weekly mentoring sessions led by the head of care. These sessions are well structured and focus on the home's internal systems, policies and the children's homes regulations. Clear succession planning from within the organisation supports the staff to develop professionally. It also provides continuity for the children.

Managers offer good support in the home and provide regular and reflective supervision for the staff. This means that the staff have been able to reflect on and review their experiences, performance and professional development. The staff say they feel supported and part of the team.

The impact of COVID-19 has been managed very well. The staff team has remained consistent and there has been no need to quarantine or isolate either the children or the staff members. The staff have supported each other during this time and their commitment has ensured the continuity of care and stability for the children.

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 registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that—	15/11/2020

medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them;

medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and

a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child.

Paragraph (2) does not apply to medicine which—
is stored by the child for whom it is provided in such a way that other persons are prevented from using it; and

may be safely self-administered by that child.
(Regulation 23 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(a)(b))

In particular, ensure that the staff's processes for the recording and disposing of medicines received into the children's home is in accordance with the home's medication policy.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2523027

Registered provider: Kennet Care

Registered provider address: c/o Stan Colaco & Co, Regus Business Centre, Centurion House, London Road, Staines Upon Thames TW18 4AX

Responsible individual: Raj Kelair

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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