

2576409

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that is registered to provide care for six children with complex social and emotional needs.

Children who live in this home receive a specific therapeutic programme to support their existing difficulties.

The registered manager in post has the relevant experience for the role and is working towards her level 5 qualification. She has been in post since the home was registered.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Six children live in the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out and three children have moved in. Children living in the home are supported with on-site education and therapeutic intervention to support their individual needs.

The home is a large house with ample space for children to spend time together and alone. It provides a homely environment for children, with a large kitchen and dining table where children and staff share meals together daily.

One child said that before coming to the home, he was worried about what it would look like. However, he said he now really likes the house and how 'homely' it is. Children also said that they like the location of the home. One parent told the inspector that it is a 'fantastic family environment', and another said that it is like 'home from home'. Children's photos are displayed throughout the home. This helps them feel a sense of belonging. The manager has organised some redecorating of the home and new carpets to be fitted to ensure the high standards are maintained.

The home is a relaxing environment, and children get along with each other. Children told the inspector that if they do fall out, the 'adults help them make up and shake hands' and move on. One parent said that when they visit the home, they can see their child has 'amazing relationships with staff, and it is like he is living with a group of brothers'. Parents said that their children are supported with emotional warmth and hugs at times when they might be upset and that the children 'love the staff'. One child said that they like one member of staff so much that they wish 'they would adopt' him.

Staff support children to take part in local activities such as country walks, boxing and football, and they take children on days out to other attractions. Special occasions such as Christmas are celebrated, and children enjoyed going to the pantomime. Staff spoke fondly of children enjoying Christmas day and said that it was like a 'typical family day'. Children and staff fondly recalled a huge snowball fight they all had together. Consequently, children are making positive memories while living at the home, which they are happy to recall and share.

Children are making outstanding progress from their starting points. They can tell the difference that living in the home and the support they receive have made to their lives. This includes understanding their emotions and being able to manage them better, maturing and completing life skills to support their independence as they get older. One child told the inspector that his confidence has grown so much that if they had met before he moved into the home, he would have been too shy to speak. A family member said that their child 'is excelling in all areas'.

Staff are supporting one child to prepare for independence. For part of the week, he independently plans his meals, cooks and cleans. For the other part of the week, staff cook for and support him to allow him to have a break. Consequently, he is making good progress and feels well supported.

In recognising the importance of life skills, the manager is supporting one child to access driving lessons. She is advocating the importance of this with the local authority, for them to also support the child. Staff have helped one child to complete a curriculum vitae that enabled him to secure a part-time job.

Children are supported to maintain relationships with people that are important to them. This has included building up the time that children spend with families to include overnight stays at a pace suited to the child and family. Importantly, staff support children and advocate for them when they feel that they are not yet ready to spend time with family members. As a result, children feel that their opinions matter and that they have the right to make choices that are important to their lives. This helps children build positive, trusting relationships with staff.

Each day, children sit together with education staff, home staff and the therapist and reflect on their day. This holistic approach to children's care means that everyone understands what is happening for them currently. Consequently, support can be tailored to their changing needs.

The children said that they like the home and that there is nothing they would want to change. They said that staff make them laugh and that they get on well. Parents said, 'The adults working in the home are brilliant,' and 'They could not do anything better.' One parent told the inspector, 'If my son has to be somewhere, then I am incredibly grateful it's there.'

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

Staff know children extremely well. They understand their needs and have well-written plans to support them should a risk arise. Consequently, this supports staff to help keep children safe. Staff responded dynamically when a serious incident occurred. This enabled them to keep the child safe and to seek relevant support for him. Staff spent time educating the child about factors that were part of the incident to help him keep himself safe. Staff reported that this incident was a turning point for the child in developing positive relationships and understanding that staff care for him and will help him be safe. Staff received relevant training, therapeutic advice and debriefs regarding the incident.

Children are taught about risks and how to support their own safety. This starts from the basics of road safety to exploitation. Children are educated about the dangers of online safety and the use of social media. Children are supported by staff to complete accredited Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) modules in specific areas tailored to their needs. As a result, children have a sense of achievement for the work they are completing through certification and accredited

qualification. Staff have in-depth insight into the progress children are making and where further support is required. The staff member who leads on this area is passionate about the work children are completing and how this is embedded into staff practice.

Children's risks have decreased since moving into the home. Children feel safe, and parents and professionals report that staff keep children safe. Staff say that they can help keep children safe because of the positive relationships they have and the training and support they receive to work in the home.

No children have been missing from the home, despite this being a previous risk for some children before moving to this home. One child has been missing during family time. Staff took appropriate steps, followed the procedures and contacted relevant professionals. They continued to contact the child, expressing their care for them to return safely.

Staff understand why children take medication and the impact this has on their health and behaviours. Staff supported one child to advocate for a reduction in his medication. This was successful and, consequently, the child's health has improved, as have their behaviours and sleep patterns.

Restraint is rarely used and is only used as a last resort to keep children safe. One child who witnessed a restraint told the inspector that staff spoke with him to make sure he was okay and understood what had happened. He said that this made him feel better. Staff recognise the impact not only on the child being restrained but also on others who witness incidents.

There have been two allegations made against staff since the last inspection. The manager has acted appropriately and reported concerns to the relevant professionals. Children and staff have been safeguarded while concerns have been reviewed and, when appropriate, staff and children have been supported to repair their relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is inspirational. She is incredibly passionate about the service, the children who live in the home and the staff team. She is highly motivated, and her enthusiasm is cascaded within the staff team.

The staff team works cohesively with the manager to ensure a consistent approach to meeting children's needs. The manager benefits from the support of the responsible individual and two deputy managers who know the home and children exceptionally well.

Staff morale is high. One staff member said, 'It's the best job I have ever had.' Staff are dedicated to children. Another staff member spoke enthusiastically about the holiday she went on with the children. Staff chose to work for five consecutive days with children to enable them to have a holiday facilitated by a consistent staff team.

Staff benefit from a robust training package to support them to understand children's traumas and how that is linked to the behaviours children display. Additionally, staff receive core training and person-centred training to help them support children's individual needs and diagnoses.

An assistant psychologist works in the home throughout the week. Her role is to provide children with one-to-one work and support the staff to meet children's needs therapeutically. As a result of this consistency, staff talk about children using therapeutic language styles. They have a good understanding of how trauma is linked to behaviours and how to appropriately respond to children to support them at times when they are experiencing difficulties.

There is a holistic approach to caring for children. The staff team works closely with the school and therapist to ensure children's needs and behaviours are understood, and there is a seamless approach to their care. Home staff and education staff share information about how children are doing twice daily. Education professionals said that the deputy manager has been influential in supporting strategies to increase one child's time in school. This has meant they have had far fewer incidents, and it has increased the child's engagement.

The manager is child-centred throughout her practice. She is insightful about children's needs to know their journey and the history of their lives. Consequently, staff are working with children and completing an 'all about me' book to support children to understand their histories and the people and places that are important to them. Staff recognise the importance of children being able to look back on their lives with meaningful information about themselves.

Staff, professionals and families are incredibly positive about the impact that the manager has on children. Words frequently used to describe her are 'amazing', 'brilliant', 'exceptional', 'approachable', 'child-friendly' and 'child-centred'. Professionals and families are regularly kept up to date with the progress children are making. Children's progress is shared with relevant people through reports that look at children's progress holistically. Education professionals, the therapist and the manager all contribute to the report. Consequently, people receiving the reports feel well informed.

Staff receive training, support and supervision to help them undertake their work to a high standard. Staff feel valued, respected and supported to enhance their skill set and make progress in their careers. To avoid staff feeling fatigued by the complex work they do, they are able to work with the therapist to help them in their role.

The manager works closely with the local police to ensure she is up to date with any local concerns in the area. Police have visited the home to meet with children and staff to promote positive relationships.

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: 2576409

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Childrens Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Compass Community Ltd, 3 Rayns Way, Syston, Leicester LE7 1PF

Responsible individual: Nicola Brown

Registered manager: Katie Davies

Inspector

Jodie Lewis, Social Care Inspector

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