

2614999

Registered provider: GAC Family Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who have social and emotional difficulties or learning disabilities.

The home is led by a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 September 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: 20 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/09/2022	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
25/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager and staff have worked hard to create a homely feel in this home. Rooms are decorated to children's wishes. There are several different pets that the children care for. This is then supported with an approach of positivity. This makes it a comfortable place for children to live.

Children's care plans are clear and detailed. They are informed by the child's local authority plan and in consultation with the child. They are written in the first person to make the documents accessible for children. They are updated regularly and are used as live working documents. This ensures that staff know how to address the child's individual needs.

Children who have found school settings difficult are now attending alternative provisions. An older child is on an apprenticeship. There is a very close working relationship between staff, the manager and the education providers. An education room has been set up to help children when they are not in school. As a result, children's educational opportunities have improved.

Children's physical and mental health needs are well met. They receive support from specialist agencies where needed. Children are encouraged to eat healthy food. They enjoy the use of a local gym and swimming pool. Therefore, children are helped to remain healthy.

Children have regular focused discussions with staff. Important issues specific to the child are talked about. This gives the children time to express their wishes and feelings and feel listened to.

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

Children's behaviour support plans identify known and potential risks. They record what might trigger unwanted behaviour for a child. They then inform staff how to respond and help children. Plans are updated whenever things change. This helps staff to safely manage difficult times for a child.

Children can identify trusted adults they can talk to. Local authority social workers say that children are well supported and have made good progress at this home. One social worker said, 'They are doing their best to support [name of child] and have worked wonders up to this point.'

Staff record any incidents with a child well. This information is then reviewed by the manager. The manager identifies any further action required, such as focused discussions and debriefs with children and staff. Incidents are discussed in supervision sessions and team meetings. This helps staff to reflect and learn how to help and protect children.

On occasion, children have misused substances. This has been taken seriously by staff. Children have had support from a local early intervention drug and alcohol service for young people. However, this is an ongoing issue for some children. Continued close working with specialists will help children to receive the support and guidance required to address this issue.

The manager ensures that complaints from children are taken seriously. The manager will talk through the complaint with the child. Once investigated, there is a thorough written response to the child. Additional action has included an effective mediation session between two children. Therefore, children feel able to raise their concerns and know they will be addressed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff speak highly of the manager and the level of support they receive. They say they can approach her about anything. She is extremely positive and an effective role model. All staff receive regular supervision. This provides a good opportunity for staff to reflect and learn. As a result, staff are helped to develop their practice.

The manager has close working relationships with social workers and other professionals. Information is shared regularly. One social worker described communication as 'fantastic'. Therefore, a team approach has been created to ensure that children's needs are met.

The manager ensures that new staff receive a thorough induction and mandatory training programme. When required, additional training is identified to meet the specific needs of a child. This ensures that staff are prepared for their role.

The manager holds a team meeting each month. There is good attendance from staff, who can join online if they cannot attend in person. The meetings are purposeful and include refreshing staff's knowledge of policies and procedures. Detailed discussions are held about each child. This helps all staff to keep up to date and contribute to the development of the home.

The registered manager is supported well by an experienced responsible individual. This includes monthly supervision and visits to the home. The manager says she can contact the responsible individual at any time. He knows the children and staff well. As a result, the manager and staff feel valued by a senior manager.

The manager has put good-quality assurance systems in place. This includes daily and weekly checks. The responsible individual carries out a comprehensive audit of the home every two months. The manager's comments are evident on records. The manager speaks of the importance of observing staff practice. This ensures that the manager has good oversight of the care, help and protection of the children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home. Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children to understand, and, where necessary, work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being. This includes, but is not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

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: 2614999

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: GAC Family Services Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 29a, The Link, 49 Effra Road, London SW2 1BZ

Responsible individual: Mark Easie

Registered manager: Emily Lingwood

Inspector

Shaun Caplis, Social Care Inspector

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