

2624784

Registered provider: Care2Care Children's Home Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in April 2021. The registered manager post has been vacant since November 2021.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 June 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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 2 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children develop positive relationships with managers and staff. Children say that they like the staff who work in the home and that they are listened to. One child said, 'They have kind of done everything for me, I would not be where I am now if it was not for them, I realised that staff have been trying to push me to be to where I need to be'.

Children are encouraged to express their views and participate in decisions in the home through children's meetings, approaching staff or using the newly installed 'suggestion box'. Children participate in their children looked after meetings. A social worker said, 'We had [name of child] child in care review last week and this was the first time the child has taken part. The child looked very happy and talked happily about all the activities they take part in and the places they have visited'.

Staff and managers promote children's educational progress and show a genuine interest in seeing children succeed. Managers and staff engage tutors to support children and develop packages of support to enable children who are anxious about attending school to attend. Managers and staff communicate effectively with education colleagues. One child who has had significant disruption in their education has just completed their GCSE's and is preparing to go to college.

Children benefit from a purpose-built activity space which comprises of a music/games area, punch balls and bags, table tennis and a pool table. The space also has a 'chill out' area for quiet reading. Children enjoy a range of community activities, go karting being a favourite. One child, a promising footballer, has never been to a football match. A staff member obtained tickets and took the child to see a football match at Wembley Stadium.

Leaders and managers provide individual support to children based on their needs. Children have access to therapists and mentors, who work closely with staff to ensure that there is consistency in the care provided. This enhances the experience of children and contributes to the good progress they make.

Children are helped to settle into the home. One child arrived in an emergency, without an opportunity to visit the home first. The manager offered a virtual tour to the child prior to their arrival so that they could see the home and staff. When children have to leave the home, leaders and managers work effectively with local authorities to ensure that the transition for these children is as smooth as possible. The welfare and well-being of children are paramount for managers and staff in these situations.

Children's religious, cultural and specific dietary needs are understood and catered for by managers and staff. Children report that they can make choices about weekly menus, and staff guide them to ensure that these choices are suitably nutritious.

Religious events related to children are observed, Ramadan being a recent example, where a staff member fasted for a period of time in support of a child. Managers and staff view mealtimes, specifically evening dinner, as a significant event in the home, where children and staff sit to share their experience of the day.

Managers and staff promote family connections for children. Children benefit from the family work staff and managers undertake to maintain positive relationships with parents and other family members. For one child, this has meant the maintenance of a relationship with a parent that had previously been fractious. This parent welcomed the opportunities the home provided for them and their child to re-build their relationship.

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

Children living at the home say that they feel safe. When asked what makes them feel safe, children said that they can approach staff as they know they will listen to their concerns and take action. One child said that they know staff are thinking about them through what they say and do. This child said that they liked 'people showing their affection and stuff, in that way'. Therefore, over time, children develop trusting relationships with staff and managers.

Managers and staff work hard to reduce the risks for children, updating risk assessments when new information becomes available and by trying to engage children to understand better the motivation for the actions that put them at risk. Managers and staff are proactive in alerting placing authorities to concerns they have regarding keeping children safe, and work collaboratively with authorities to reduce risk.

Managers and staff strive to respond effectively to children when they go missing from home. Managers and staff look for children when they are missing from home and will follow children where they can, to encourage them to return home. Managers and staff establish relationships with those known to the child outside of the home, to identify the child's whereabouts. Managers and staff understand their responsibilities in terms of reporting children missing from home.

Formal and informal key work sessions are used to address behaviour and support children to express their feelings safely. One child has been helped to re-direct their frustrations by moving to one of the 'chill out' spaces in the home or using the punch bags in the gym and recreation area. This child said, 'Staff know when I am in a mood or depressed, even though I may not want to talk about how I am feeling, staff find a way through and know how to calm me down'.

Leaders and managers have revised their practice on room searches. Staff have been helped to understand the difference between room searches when serious concerns arise for the safety of children and room checks which are health and safety driven. Children understand the difference and reasons for the intrusion into their private space, and welcome room checks as these are linked to privileges.

Leaders and managers need to review their recruitment processes, as verification of references is not taking place in a consistent manner in line with the home's own procedures. This does not ensure that children are kept safe from adults who may harm them or place them at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager post has been vacant since November 2021. The current manager will be registering shortly. Despite identifying areas for development in the home, leaders and managers have not been sufficiently effective and efficient in addressing weaknesses in practice and procedures. However, this ineffectiveness has not placed children at risk or resulted in their welfare not being safeguarded.

Leaders and managers have a recruitment plan in place to attract appropriately qualified and experienced staff to care for children. Leaders and managers are determined to create a stable and skilled staff team that is able to offer consistency of care to children, but acknowledge that they have not yet achieved this.

Leaders and managers use learning from the previous inspections to improve the experiences and care of children. For example, leaders and managers request that staff record accurately the communication and actions taken with children to help staff to reflect better on what made a difference to that child. However, leaders and managers do not include the experiences of parents, carers and other professionals, so that the monitoring of the quality of care is as effective as it can be in identifying strengths as well as areas for improvement.

Leaders and managers work well with local authorities, agencies and professionals to ensure that children's care plans are carried out to achieve the best outcomes for children. One professional wrote that a key strength of the home is that 'The care staff have worked well with the 'team around the child' approach'. The home's own care plans are comprehensive.

Managers and most staff receive regular supervision which not only focuses on children's needs and experiences, but also allows managers and staff to reflect on their own practice and the effect on them of working with traumatised children. Staff are supported and held accountable for their specific roles and responsibilities in supervision, and team meetings are used to reinforce and clarify essential tasks. Staff report that they have approachable managers and work with a supportive team. However, agency staff do not receive regular supervision, and this needs to be addressed.

Leaders and managers have worked hard to provide staff with a range of learning and development opportunities to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge needed to provide the best care to children. Staff are supported to achieve relevant qualifications, and leaders and managers report that they have overhauled the induction process to better prepare staff for their roles. However, leaders and

managers are not consistent in the implementation of the induction process so that all staff benefit from it.

The home is maintained and furnished to make it feel as 'homely' as possible, and pictures of children living in the home are visible in the main sitting room area. However, information regarding safeguarding is situated under a large banner immediately as children come into the home. The position of this banner does not reflect the 'homely' feel leaders and managers wish to create.

Children's case records contain good evidence of work carried out with them as well as pictures of children undertaking a range of recreational, leisure and educational activities. Achievement certificates and well-done cards form part of the case records. However, essential children looked after documents are now not available on all children's files, so that all those caring for children know and understand what has informed the plan they are working to achieve. In addition, leaders and managers do not ensure that case files are regularly audited.

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 provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1) (a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	30 Sep 2022
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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(c)(d) and (e)) This specifically relates to ensuring that there are some suitably qualified, skilled and experienced staff working at the home.	30 Sep 2022

The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(d)) This specifically relates to ensuring that references for new staff are verified in line with good practice and the providers own procedures.	30 Sep 2022
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 1(a)(b) (4)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the registered person demonstrates that all staff have completed a comprehensive induction and probationary review of their individual performance and are working towards obtaining a suitable qualification in line with agreed procedures.	30 Sep 2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—	30 Sep 2022

include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1) (a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that children's case records hold all of the required up to date child in care documents.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(5)) This relates specifically to ascertaining and considering the opinions of parents, placing authorities and staff as part of the review of quality of care.	30 Sep 2022

Recommendations

- The registered manager should review the position of information boards to ensure that the living environment is welcoming and far as possible not 'intuitional' in impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that agency staff who work on a regular basis in the home receive supervision, support and guidance to enable them to fulfil their professional roles within this particular children's home.
(Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 54, paragraph 10.16)

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: 2624784

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care2Care Children's Home Ltd

Registered provider address: Room 147, 981 Great West Road, Brentford,
London TW8 9DN

Responsible individual: Chukwukem Mafe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Colin Bent, Social Care Inspector

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