

2651806

Registered provider: Caritas Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted on 25 November 2021 and is privately owned. It provides care for up to 4 children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

There is no registered manager at the home. The current manager is applying to register with Ofsted.

The home refers to the staff as adults. The report reflects the language used in the home.

At the time of this inspection, 4 children were living in the home.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 February 2026

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: 4 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
08/06/2023	Full	Good
03/10/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from being cared for by nurturing adults who are committed to meeting their individual needs. They are helped to develop trusting relationships with adults, through a variety of relationship-building activities. Three children have lived at the home for some time. One child has made significant progress and is developing their independence skills and attending college full time. Another child arrived at the home without a full-time school placement. Their school attendance has now improved to full time, and they have regular interests outside the home to promote their health and wellbeing. One external professional noted how well the adults understood the child's needs, demonstrating care, empathy and appropriate therapeutic responses.

Adults are proactive in supporting the children to take part in a range of activities of their choosing, both inside and outside the home. One child competently made a cake during the inspection. Adults reflected on the progress that the child had made in their confidence in doing this.

Children have appropriate and carefully assessed supported time with their family, friends and other people who are important to them. There are no unnecessary restrictions in place. Adults work proactively and positively with parents to promote meaningful and safe contact and continuity of care, where appropriate. One parent commented on the dedication and care shown by the adults, noting the progress made by their child while living at the home and the adults' support with family time arrangements.

Children's voices are clearly heard in the home, through weekly feedback documents completed by adults. This has led to changes to menu planning, as well as discussing topics such as relationships between the children and the activities that they would like to do.

Children are supported and encouraged to access education and to learn. The adults work closely with education staff and advocate strongly for children to receive the support that they need. For one child, this has enabled an alternative education provision to be explored to meet their needs.

The communal areas of the property are homely and child friendly and include a display of a child's artwork and photos. Children are supported to personalise their bedrooms. Overall, the home environment helps children to feel comfortable and nurtured. However, one child's bedroom has not been checked regularly to ensure that it is well maintained and hygienic.

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

The adults promote positive behaviour through an ethos of trust and shared responsibility. The manager and the adults have developed where the use of restraint is rare. The adults know the children well and they use their relationships with them to better understand the challenges that the children face, so that they can provide a personalised and supportive response. As a result, children have more positive experiences.

Children's safety online is well managed. Adults monitor children's online activity to ensure that they are not accessing inappropriate sites. When children are vulnerable to online risk, they are supported to learn about how to keep themselves safe. Key-work sessions and discussions on internet safety take place in the home.

Adults understand children's risks and vulnerabilities, and they take effective action to address concerns about children's safety. However, one child's impact risk assessment had not been recorded. As a result, adults have not had the full and relevant information to care for the child, either in the home or the wider community.

Children are cared for by a core team of adults, supplemented by agency workers. Pre-employment suitability checks are carried out for permanent workers. However, 2 gaps in one worker's employment history had not been recorded as explored, and references had not been verified. This undermines the manager's ability to make fully informed decisions about the suitability of adults to work with children.

When children go missing from home, they experience a well-coordinated response from adults. The adults work with the police and others in the children's networks to locate them and ensure their safe return. Adults work with placing authorities to ensure that children are offered an opportunity to speak to someone independent about their time away from the home.

Allegations are managed effectively. The manager documents correspondence with the local authority designated officer and acts on the guidance given. Internal investigations are carried out well, with outcomes identified.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been a number of changes to the management team since the last inspection. The home's manager has been in post for 4 months and has applied to register with Ofsted. Two previous managers have left, which has created some instability in relation to oversight and staffing. Leaders have tried to ensure that the children have been supported through these changes, in order to minimise the impact.

The manager is committed to providing a home where the children can develop and flourish. She has implemented several positive changes, including monthly tracking sheets to support the progress of the children. She understands the home's strengths and actively drives change to tackle the areas for development. She has a clear

understanding of the home's model of care and has systems in place to monitor the care and progress of children. However, 2 serious incidents since the last inspection were not notified to Ofsted. The leadership team has plans in place to address this.

Adults say that they feel supported and that they receive regular practice-related supervision and have their practice appraised annually. This provides them with an opportunity to reflect on their professional development and wellbeing. One adult said they know who to go to for support and they feel listened to. This process has also helped managers to identify how they can better help adults to support children. For example, they have provided further training opportunities and bite-sized learning programmes which can be undertaken at the home. This is in line with the home's statement of purpose and is responsive to the changing behaviours of the children, in order to meet their needs.

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, The 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 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 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. In particular, If a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults, verification so far as reasonably practicable of the reason why the employment or position ended, a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))	1 May 2026
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	1 May 2026
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	1 May 2026

The registered person to ensure—

that staff—

assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(b))

In particular, ensure that the needs of new children referred to the home are reviewed and assessed as being appropriate to the skills and experience of the staff working there.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure adults implement the necessary routines for children's bedrooms to be cleaned regularly. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)

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: 2651806

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Caritas Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 1a Denne Hill Business Centre, Womenswold,
Canterbury CT4 6HD

Responsible individual: Catherine Eeles

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Maria Calway-Kennedy, Social Care Inspector

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