

2672636

Registered provider: Caring Steps Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It provides care for four children who have had adverse childhood experiences.

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager, who has been in post since the home was registered with Ofsted in June 2022.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the first inspection since the home opened in June 2022. There are two children currently living in the home. Since the home opened, three children have moved in, and one child has moved out of the home.

Children receive excellent care from an enthusiastic and resolute staff team. Staff are knowledgeable and attuned to each child's needs. Relationships between staff and children are warm, affectionate and loving. Staff are continually curious about, and reflect on, how they can help children grow in all areas of their development. This helps children to build trust and to feel safer and relaxed in their surroundings.

The children say that they like living in the home, and that they are happy and safe. They are positive about the care that they receive. One child told the inspector that they wanted to live in the home until they are 18 years old. Staff and children are proud to celebrate their individual and shared successes. This supports children to feel safe and secure and develop a sense of belonging.

The manager and staff value and place high importance on children's education. As a result, children do well in education and attendance has improved. One child's attendance has increased from 40% to 85%. Staff advocate for children's education and work closely with educational professionals to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved academically for children. This support helps children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. It also provides them with a better opportunity to reach their full potential and increases their life chances.

Staff manage children's health needs well. Staff work with external agencies to meet all children's care and health needs. Staff support children to access mental health services. Individual support plans are comprehensive, detail key information and provide staff with clear guidance on how to support children's physical and emotional well-being. This approach enhances positive health outcomes for children.

Staff support children to maintain contact with family and friends. Staff understand that these relationships are integral to supporting positive outcomes for children. For example, one child who did not regularly see their sibling is now seeing them weekly. They have just enjoyed a day out at the seaside and there is planning for the children to have an overnight stay and go on holiday together soon. This level of support ensures that children maintain positive relationships with those who are close to them.

Staff support children to have positive day-to-day experiences and are encouraged to develop their own hobbies and interests. One child has joined and regularly attends a boxing club. The other child regularly attends a local youth club and has

joined a local football team. Sharing activities enables children to grow in confidence and improve their self-esteem and social skills.

Staff understand the importance of children feeling heard and listened to. Staff ensure that they seek the children's views. They use various forums to achieve this, including children's meetings, allocated adult sessions and general chats. This allows the children to share and talk about their achievements, reflect on events and learn how to manage conflict. These opportunities provide valuable life experiences for children to learn how to communicate and listen effectively.

Children benefit from living in a comfortable, spacious and well-maintained home. The home is warm and homely and has a family atmosphere. There are photos of the children enjoying activities, as well as children's awards and trophies for their achievements on display throughout the home. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their own individual tastes; this allows them to take a sense of pride in their home and promotes a sense of belonging.

On one occasion, the manager admitted a child with minimal information about the child and their needs. As a result, the staff were unable to meet the child's needs and the manager had to serve notice on the placement. The manager has since reviewed the admissions process to ensure that more information is obtained before children are admitted to the home in an emergency.

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

Managers and staff have positive regard for the safety and well-being of children. Children's written plans are comprehensive and kept up to date. Detailed individual support plans provide staff with clear guidance and strategies to support children. The oversight of managers is effective in ensuring that staff always have up-to-date guidance.

There have been no significant safeguarding or missing-from-home incidents. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. Staff were able to tell the inspector the actions they would take if a child were to go missing or they were concerned about a child's safety.

Managers take prompt action when there are allegations or complaints. The manager ensures that information is shared swiftly with appropriate professionals to avoid delay and ensure that children are protected from harm. Staff and managers take prompt action when there are allegations and complaints. Children are kept informed of any outcomes. This ensures that children feel confident to raise concerns. It also helps them to feel safe and secure in their environment.

Staff educate children about risk. Children take part in allocated adult sessions with staff to address identified risks and raise their awareness about topics of concern. This direct work includes healthy relationships, appropriate touch and internet safety. This positive work enhances children's knowledge of risk and allows them to

take the lead in their learning. Because of this, children are educated about the risks that they may face.

Staff's approach to behaviour management is excellent. Staff use rewards and praise to reinforce positive behaviour from children. Consequences are rarely used, and physical intervention has not been used in this home. Staff use highly effective de-escalation and therapeutic parenting techniques to defuse situations. Staff and the manager have extensive knowledge of the children and their risks. They use this alongside their experience, understanding of children's behaviours and the home's model of care to work restoratively with children. The manager has thorough oversight of incidents and ensures that staff and children reflect on all incidents. This creates a culture of reflection and learning for all. It supports children to feel safe, secure and more confident in their relationships with staff.

Staff ensure that children live in safe environment. Staff conduct regular health and safety checks, including fire drills, to ensure that the premises are safe, and the child can respond in an emergency.

The manager follows safer recruitment practices. This ensures that only vetted individuals work at the home and provide care for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is an ambitious and inspirational leader. She leads by example, providing highly effective leadership. She has created an environment where everyone can succeed. She has high aspirations for both children and staff and will go above and beyond to help them to reach their potential. This leadership inspires staff to provide exceptional care. The manager has created an open and inclusive culture that places children at the centre of practice. She has an exceptional knowledge of the children's starting points and what they have accomplished since living at the home.

The manager has developed highly effective monitoring systems to review the quality of care that children receive. Leaders and managers complete regular audits to scrutinise the performance of the home and children's outcomes. They use these extremely well. The manager also uses independent person assessments and development plans to continuously develop the service and ensure that staff's practice consistently exceeds the standard of good.

The manager is well regarded and is nurturing towards the staff team. This means that staff work in an environment where they feel valued and well supported. Staff say they 'love' working in the home. Staff receive high-quality supervision and leaders complete individual development sessions with staff to help them develop and achieve. Team meetings are regular and reflective and support the staff to work together to provide consistent care for children.

Staff training is excellent. Managers ensure that staff receive mandatory training, as well as extensive additional and child-specific training. There are also regular

training sessions around the home's model of care and consultations with the home's clinician. This ensures that children receive care from skilled and knowledgeable staff who can meet their needs.

Partnership working is a key strength of the home. Staff and the manager collaborate with other professionals to ensure that the care provided to children is well coordinated. Education staff have recently been invited to attend specialist training in the home, to improve their knowledge about one child's specific needs. The manager will persistently challenge those who are not meeting children's needs, or when she feels that decisions are not in the best interests of the child.

Feedback from professionals is excellent. Social workers and professionals were extremely positive about the progress that children have made since living at the home. Everyone who spoke to the inspector said that the communication is excellent. The care afforded to children is exceptional. Professionals were highly complimentary of the manager. One professional told the inspector that 'the home is the best with which I have ever worked. They put [Name of the child]'s needs first and at the centre of everything.' Another said that '[Name of the child] would not be where they are without the home, and the hard work of the staff.'

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

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: 2672636

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Caring Steps Ltd

Registered provider address: Highcroft, Holyhead Road, Albrighton WV7 3AN

Responsible individual: Sunil Mangara

Registered manager: Bethan Lock

Inspector

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

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