

2742756

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

There has been no registered manager since January 2024.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 September 2024

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have built caring and loving relationships with the children in this home, and they ensure they maintain these relationships. The children feel safe to share their feelings with staff, knowing they will be listened to and their worries taken seriously. This has led to the children having positive experiences in the home and making progress in many areas of their lives.

Staff ensure children have access to education. However, one child has not been able to access formal education on a full-time basis. The staff ensure the child receives educational input and structure in the hours they are not at school. Staff's effective liaison with external professionals has ensured the child will be returning to full-time education this term. All children are supported to understand the importance of education, and this has resulted in the children learning and making progress.

Staff promote positive overall health and well-being for the children. Children are supported to maintain good hygiene, diet, sleep and day-to-day routine. Children enjoy meals with staff, and they are supported to shop and cook their own meals. Staff ensure there is an appropriate balance of the children having their own space and being part of a wider family as part of the home. This has resulted in a sense of belonging and permanence for the children.

The children are provided with access to regular health services, including routine checks with their dentist and opticians. Children are provided with medication as they require it and are supported to self-medicate as appropriate. Medication is stored and monitored correctly. There has been one medication error, which was responded to quickly. Appropriate action was taken to mitigate any risk and learn from it.

Staff ensure that children spend time with people who are important to them. Staff work with family, friends and external agencies to promote positive relationships and ensure that any restrictions are reviewed and removed as necessary.

The staff ensure the children have experiences and activities in line with their wishes and feelings. Staff arrange trips to theme parks, trips to London, days out in the local area, time alone with friends and a trip abroad was arranged this summer. While on holiday, the children were able to enjoy time at a water park, explore the local area and see sharks and whales on a boat trip. Children enjoy a range of new and positive experiences.

On one occasion, a child moved out of the home in an unplanned way. The staff worked hard with external agencies to prevent this and protect all the children in the home. When the child left, the welfare of the child remained at the centre of the manager's mind. She worked with professionals to support the child's move and provided the child with a goodbye letter.

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

Leaders and staff have a proactive approach to protecting the children from harm. There are plans in place to support the children to find alternative ways to express difficult emotions. The children feel able to talk to staff about wanting to self-harm. Staff have been able to respond to this and develop strategies to reduce this happening. The staff work with specialist professionals to understand how best to support the children and have taken on board all advice, including around safety planning in the home. This has included locking kitchen knives and scissors away, having robust online checks in place and undertaking room searches. The proactive response to this risk has resulted in incidents of self-harm being reduced. There is a risk assessment in place around locking knives away, but there is no plan in place to review this in line with the children's changing needs.

The manager understands the risks that the internet and using social media pose to the children. They recognise that these risks can impact on children's emotional well-being, can expose them to unsafe content, especially in relation to self-harm, and can also impact on how they are able to build safe relationships. Extensive work has been done with staff to ensure they have effective risk assessments and monitoring documents in place. They monitor the children's online and phone use appropriately. Any concerns are responded to swiftly, and children are supported to understand concerns and learn from them. The manager recognises the need to support the children to have a safe and positive online presence.

The children trust the adults in the home and feel able to talk to them after any incidents. Positive behaviour is promoted and celebrated. Any consequences are used appropriately, and staff support the children to understand their behaviour. Staff respond to children with empathy and care while being clear on expectations of behaviour. The staff record work with the children in a child-friendly way. Following incidents, some records lack sufficient reflection about how the children were feeling.

Investigations into allegations and complaints are handled fairly and quickly. The information is shared with appropriate agencies, and the staff have developed effective links with local authority designated officers. Children are supported to understand the process of investigation and are kept informed. The manager has clear reflective logs after each allegation or complaint to learn from them and understand the impact of them on children and staff.

Restraint has been used. The risk assessments around the use of restraint are clearly set out, and it is not used as a first method to manage behaviour but a last resort when children and adults are at significant risk of harm. Techniques used to prevent restraint are detailed in the records. When restraint is used, the incidents are accurately recorded by staff involved. The records are reviewed and monitored by managers.

There are plans in place for when children go missing from home. The staff follow the risk assessments in place and look for the children when they are missing. The staff ensure that the children are always provided with a timely return to home interview.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The current manager was previously the deputy manager of another home operated by the company. This smooth transition has provided consistency for the staff and children. The manager has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

The manager of this home is passionate in her vision for the children to achieve well in all areas of their lives. She has built strong and effective working relationships with external agencies to enhance the care of the children and make a positive impact on their lives. She manages the home effectively and ensures all children have individualised plans and risk assessments. These plans are driven by the desire to support progress and support the children to reach significant milestones.

The manager consistently reviews and monitors the quality of care that is being provided. They seek feedback from children, staff and external agencies to enhance the care they provide. The manager seeks to learn from experiences in the home and reflects after incidents and allegations and on the day-to-day care provided. This holistic approach to understanding the practice in the home allows them to monitor all areas of care and practice effectively.

The staff team benefits from regular team meetings, which are used to discuss care and reflect on practice. The children in their care are at the centre of discussions. Team meetings are used effectively to ensure staff know what challenges the children may be facing and how to meet their needs. Support from an internal therapy team provides staff with greater understanding of the reasons behind children's care and what may be needed to ensure they can thrive.

Staff supervision sessions are provided regularly. They focus on one topic or on an overview of a period. Staff well-being and the children are discussed, as well as clear actions on practice and professional development.

Training is up to date, and additional training is arranged to enhance staff knowledge and respond to the children's needs. Staff development is a clear ethos of the home. The manager has developed a system to ensure she supports individual staff development effectively, tracking and monitoring their progress and understanding their personal well-being.

The physical environment of the home is generally well furnished and maintained to a high standard. While most of the home looks and feels like a family home, there are some areas and signs that detract from this. These remind those living and visiting the home that it is an institution.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home maintains a homely and domestic feel, keeping in mind the impact on the children of health and safety signs and the large office. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 2.9)
- The registered person should ensure that the locking away of kitchen knives continues to be informed by a rigorous assessment of the individual child's needs and kept under review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the children are supported to fully reflect on their emotions and individual feelings after incidents and that this is recorded in a clear way without adult opinions. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2742756

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Angela Sayers

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Hannah Spencer-Townsend, Social Care Inspector

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