

2817348

Registered provider: RCS operations LTD trading as Cumulus Care Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in February 2025 and is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2025

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	outstanding
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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

The home has welcomed one child since it opened. Before moving, the child was able to visit the home along with their family, meet the staff in the home and share information about themselves. When there was a delay in finalising the move, the manager spoke to the child to make them aware of the reasons for the delay. Such steps are likely to have reduced any anxiety the child felt during a significant change in their life and contributed to them settling into the home quickly.

The home is well furnished and decorated, providing a pleasant space for children to enjoy themselves. However, the use of window restrictors on downstairs windows, as well as one of the bathrooms remaining locked, detracts from the homely feel.

The child is receiving individualised care. Staff are working hard to build positive relationships with the child. Their approach is well informed by the home's therapeutic leads, who promote a culture of reflection and professional curiosity. This approach by staff is supporting the child's good progress. The child is better able to express their feelings in a positive way, is beginning to trust staff and is engaging with education.

The child's education is treated as a priority. Leaders and managers are strong advocates for the child. They have ensured that the child has an education placement and promoted their return to mainstream education at a pace that supports the child's confidence and learning. As a result, the child has successfully returned to mainstream education, and their attendance is improving. The child's family said that the child now speaks positively about school. These changes in attendance, engagement and attitude to learning are enhancing the child's life opportunities.

At the time of the inspection, the child was on a reduced timetable. During the time they are not in education, staff have not offered the child a programme of structured activities. As a result, opportunities to help the child further develop a routine, build relationships with staff, and expand their interests have been missed. Such an approach may make a return to full-time education feel less daunting and more achievable for the child.

The child's health needs are well supported. Staff are proactive and persistent when it comes to promoting the child's health and engagement with health professionals. Where there are barriers, they have sought to overcome them. For example, they have arranged for an optician to visit the home. As a result, the child's attendance at health appointments has improved.

Staff use professional curiosity to monitor any concerns regarding the child's health and share relevant information with the necessary professionals. This approach has given staff the information they need to advocate for the child and receive help promptly.

The staff prioritise the child's relationships with friends and family. They ensure that the child can spend time with their friends and family and, where appropriate, enjoy sleepovers with them. This promotes the child's identity and well-being.

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

Staff understand the importance of positive relationships in keeping children safe. They make the most of the opportunities they have and are creative in their approach to building relationships. For example, staff have written the child letters, poems and songs. As a result, the child is beginning to speak to staff about the things that worry them.

The staff's approach to safeguarding is underpinned by widespread use of professional curiosity and a strong understanding of contextual safeguarding. Staff have a good understanding of the risks to the child and are proactive in identifying and reducing emerging risks. As a result, the child is becoming safer.

Safeguarding incidents have reduced. There have not been any incidents of staff physically intervening to ensure the safety of the child or others. The child has not gone missing from the home for a period of two months. Since moving to the home, the child has gone missing on two occasions. On both occasions, staff have followed the child's plan and collaborated well with partner agencies and appropriate family members to ensure that the child returns home safely. Management oversight of these incidents is reflective and detailed. Staff have conversations with the child to learn why they went missing and to support the child's understanding of how to be safe.

Staff are skilled in de-escalation and in promoting positive interactions. As a result, consequences are rarely used. When used, consequences are natural and restorative in nature, supporting the child's learning and giving them the opportunity to repair relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are inspirational, confident, ambitious and child focused, and they are building a strong ethos of reflection and learning in the home. They have high aspirations for children and are strong advocates for them. The advocacy of leaders and managers is leading to improved outcomes for the child. One professional said of leaders and managers, 'They go above and beyond. They are very curious and inquisitive. They appropriately ask questions; they will challenge us. Communication is excellent.'

Leaders and managers work closely with each other and maintain a strong presence in the home. Oversight of the home is constant and ongoing. Various monitoring systems are used, allowing managers and staff to carry out effective reviews of the quality of care children receive. This contributes to a culture of learning in the home, which, in turn, helps the child feel safe and supports them to make progress.

Managers provide staff with high-quality training on topics relevant to the child they care for. Supervision sessions are regular and of high quality. They help staff reflect on their practice and focus heavily on children's experiences and progress. As a result, the child is receiving care from skilled and knowledgeable staff.

Leaders and managers have created a positive culture in the home. They talk passionately about the importance of valuing and supporting staff so that they can provide the best care for children. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working in the home. One staff member said, 'I love it; it's like a dream come true.' Another said, 'Working at [name of home] has been an incredible experience.' The positive culture created by leaders and managers ensures that the child is cared for by staff who are highly motivated.

Leaders and managers are skilled at building effective working relationships with children's key professionals and family members. Other professionals have been complimentary about the communication, reflection, and culture of learning in the home. One professional said, 'The managers are open and reflective. There is a reflective and learning culture here, rather than a blaming culture.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children's needs. In most cases, children's homes are homely, domestic environments. The home must comply with relevant health and safety legislation, such as alarms and food hygiene. However, in doing so, the home should seek, as far as possible, to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when children are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, they work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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: 2817348

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: RCS operations LTD trading as Cumulus Care Services

Registered provider address: Cheylesmore Ltd, Unit 7, Edison Buildings, Electric Wharf, Coventry CV1 4JA

Responsible individual: Victoria Wallace

Registered manager: Sally Williams

Inspector

John Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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