

SC005553

Registered provider: Dalepeak Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to five children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2010.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 27 January 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection date: 8 February 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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 8 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/01/2020	Full	Good
31/10/2018	Full	Good
24/10/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive well-planned care. They are supported by a range of external agencies, including the looked after children's nurse, and the child and adolescent mental health service. In addition, children receive regular psychological input from the in-house therapist. This wrap-around support ensures that children are provided with consistent care that takes account of children's lived experiences. A child said, 'The staff always help me; I am settled and happy here.'

Children with a long-term plan of independence are helped and supported to develop the skills required to succeed. Children are supported to eat healthily and on a budget. As a result, children can plan and prepare food from scratch using raw ingredients. Likewise, children are provided with professional careers advice and guidance to develop their career pathway. This means that children feel prepared for their transition into adulthood.

Children are consistently consulted about the care they receive in the home. They regularly complete the children's home surveys, attend children's meetings, and have regular one-to-one discussions with their key workers. This enables children to develop a sense of ownership regarding the decisions being made about their individual care. A child said, 'I have been here a long time. It's my home and I feel that my views count.'

Individual children's records are regularly reviewed by key workers and kept up to date. However, because most records are electronic, there is little evidence that children are provided with an opportunity to review their records or include comments on the progress they make. This information would be extremely valuable should a child wish to review their files now or in the future.

Children receive suitable support in order to maintain contact with their family and friends. Contact plans are in place and provide clear information and guidance regarding where contact is permitted or restricted.

Children are helped and supported to try out new activities and develop hobbies in accordance with their individual interests. For example, one child has developed excellent writing and painting skills. Each of these activities helps the child to develop key life skills such as patience and concentration, and a sense of achievement. His completed work is proudly displayed around the home.

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

The children's safety and well-being are prioritised in this home. This is because children's individual risk management plans are developed in partnership with the children and external professionals. The risk management plans are routinely

reviewed and updated to ensure that the most effective strategies are in place should a concern arise.

The staff demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that children are safe and remain safe. This is evidenced in the range of individual and group direct work sessions addressing known areas of risk and potential areas of risk.

Since the last monitoring visit in January 2021, the home experienced a period of increased missing-from-home episodes. During this period, the staff took effective and responsive action to locate the children and return them safely to the home. However, despite the manager requesting return home interviews in accordance with regulation, the placing authority fails to consistently provide them. This means that the children are not provided with opportunities to discuss the missing from home episodes with an independent person. Consequently, critical information pertaining to the child's time away from the home is not gleaned or shared with the registered manager to help inform future safeguarding strategies.

The staff are trained in the use of physical intervention and de-escalation techniques. Overall, the staff manage behaviours effectively, resulting in the minimal use of a physical intervention. Where this measure is required, it is brief and only used to remove a significant risk to a child. Records of such interventions are clear and include the debrief with the child and the staff involved, and a follow up key-work session that addresses the behaviours leading to a physical intervention.

Children are provided with detailed information about how to make a complaint. This information includes contact numbers for external agencies, should the child wish to speak to somebody independently of the home. Records of complaints made by children are thorough and include the complaint outcome and feedback to the child. A social worker said, 'The staff take the views of children seriously. They listen and are interested. If there are problems, I have every confidence that they address it. My child has been happy and settled for eight years.'

Behaviour management plans are in place and include strategies for managing risk taking or challenging behaviours. On the whole, the plans work well. Children are able to learn about their triggers for behaviour and coping strategies to help them to regulate their emotions. However, there are some occasions where sanctions are issued that do not relate to the behaviours being exhibited, for example the loss of a monetary incentive. This does not provide the child with the guidance and support required to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves or others around them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since 12 August 2010. He has extensive experience working with children in a residential setting.

Since the last monitoring visit in January 2021, four children have been discharged from the home. Three children successfully transitioned into independent living, and

one child returned to their family home. One child is currently accommodated in the home.

The home is currently operating with a limited staff team. This is because a number of staff have left the service to take up new opportunities. Although recruitment for vacant positions is ongoing, there remains a deficit. As a result, the registered manager and senior manager have taken the decision not to admit any further children until the home's full refurbishment is complete and a full staff team is in place. The registered manager has not yet reviewed the patterns and trends of those staff who have left the service. The home's statement of purpose does not reflect the current staffing structure in the home.

Good internal and external monitoring systems provide the home with a clear approach to the overall monitoring of care. Records highlight areas for development and reflect some of the matters identified within this inspection.

Team meetings and monthly clinical meetings take place and provide staff with an opportunity to review the emerging patterns and trends evident in the home, for example identifying potential triggers for a child's behaviour. This detail has proven to be highly valuable in further developing children's plans and how staff work with the children.

Staff receive good support from the manager. Formal supervisions take place regularly and informal support is available on a daily basis. A staff member said, 'The manager is very supportive, and he is always available for advice and support.'

Likewise, staff receive ongoing training, including mandatory training and relevant online focused training. A staff member said, 'We have a very good training facility. The manager makes sure we access as many opportunities as we can. If we need anything more specific, the manager will sort it out.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the behaviour management strategy is understood and applied at all times by staff, and must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. Specifically, ensure that the sanctions used in the home are reflective of the behaviours being exhibited. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, Paragraph 9.34)
- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of the turnover of staff, whether agency or directly employed, and be able to understand and where possible, address any negative trends. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)
- The registered person should ensure that the following elements of the workforce plan be included in the Statement of Purpose the staffing structure and the experience and qualifications of staff. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.10)
- The registered person must ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that children are actively encouraged to read their records and to add further information to them. Children should be regularly reminded of their rights to see information kept about them and be given information about how they might be supported to access their records in later life. (Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards, page 62, paragraph 14.6)

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: SC005553

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dalepeak Limited

Registered provider address: Richard House, 9 Winckley Square, Preston PR1 3HP

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Hiley

Registered manager: John Allen

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022