

# SC005751

Registered provider: Care Afloat Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation and is registered to care for one child who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

The home is managed by an experienced and qualified manager who was registered in February 2022. She is also the registered manager of another children's home.

### Inspection dates: 29 and 30 January 2025

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
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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 | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 10 October 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 10/10/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 04/05/2022      | Full            | Good                            |
| 23/02/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 21/08/2019      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The child in this home is well cared for and looked after. Relationships between the child and staff are mostly positive. Staff understand the impact that children's experiences can have on their behaviour and relationships. When relationships are not positive, staff work hard to understand any barriers and act to make changes.

Care planning meetings take place between the home, social worker and other relevant professionals. Care plans are updated regularly. Professionals talked positively about the home and the care that children receive. The child has made progress since the last inspection. A social worker said that staff have done 'remarkably well and the staff are consistent with the challenges [child's name] presents and they support his identity'.

Staff work in partnership with a range of professionals and family members. Staff support the child to attend health appointments and seek additional guidance from specialist health professionals, such as the forensic child and adolescent mental health team and the looked-after children's nurse.

Staff are ambitious for the child and support them to attend education. When there are challenges in school, staff respond quickly, working alongside other professionals to reduce any impact that these barriers may have on the child's learning.

Children's time with family and friends is supported in line with the local authority agreed plan. When concerns arise during family time, staff work with partner agencies to develop appropriate plans. This helps to maintain and develop important relationships. This is important to the child's sense of self and identity.

The manager has identified that the child does not respond well to direct work sessions that involve sitting down and discussing their feelings. An online questionnaire has been designed to help the child express their emotions when they do not want to talk to adults. These questionnaires still allow the staff to understand the child's view about important topics and link in with the child's risk assessments and care plan.

The child has opportunities on a day-to-day basis to experience enjoyable and fun activities. All achievements are celebrated by the staff team.

Leaders and managers are aware of the areas for development in the home, especially around the building and renovation work that needs to be attended to. There is an action plan to address most of them. However, the home was unclean in some areas, including the bathrooms, stairs, landing and kitchen area. There was a discarded chair in the rear garden that staff had omitted to remove and dispose of appropriately.

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

Risk assessments contain relevant risks and are updated regularly. The assessments contain detailed strategies for staff to follow. Staff understand the risks to the child and how to manage them. However, some staff were unaware of the reporting procedures in relation to whistle-blowing and did not understand the role of the local authority designated officer.

The use of physical interventions is appropriate in keeping the child safe. The interventions are short in duration, and staff continue to provide emotional support and guidance throughout.

Staff respond appropriately to missing-from-home incidents, which are rare. Staff follow the procedures in place and record all required information accurately and in a timely way. Staff are trained and aware of the missing-from-home procedures.

Staff are recruited safely. The regular monitoring of staff ensures that unsuitable people do not work in the home. Any allegations against staff are managed robustly and sensitively. The appropriate agencies are informed, in line with child protection procedures.

Fire safety checks have not always been completed and fire evacuation drills have not always been carried out when the child is in the home. Fire drills should be carried out randomly and at different times of the day to allow the child to be aware of the correct procedures to follow.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The home is led and managed by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. She is supported by an experienced and qualified deputy manager. The manager and deputy have a good understanding of the child's needs and their progress and experiences.

The safe area assessment is detailed. It includes relevant information about risks in the locality and guidance on what control measures are in place to ensure that the child is safe. However, the document does not include the views of, or consultation with, professionals, which limits its effectiveness.

There is an in-depth induction programme for all staff, and it is completed in a timely manner. However, not all staff are up to date with the home's mandatory training, and staff have not completed any training that is specific to the needs of the individual child, such as 'Prevent', bullying, bereavement, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorder.

Staff work as a team and say that they enjoy working in the home. Staff said that they receive support from the management team. However, staff do not receive regular practice-related supervision. This means that staff do not have an opportunity to reflect

on their performance or gain individualised support from senior staff to improve their development.

Since the last inspection, managers have not used monitoring systems to improve their oversight of care practices and documentation in the home. However, the manager is fully aware of the shortfalls in the home. Improvements are planned, which include revising supervision records, updating and reviewing training records and taking action to ensure that all building works and areas of redecoration are actioned.

The manager's quality of care review report is updated by the deputy manager. However, the document is not evaluative and does not seek the opinions of the children, staff, families or external professionals. In addition, the report has not been submitted to the regulator within the required timescales.

## 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         |
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| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(vii)(b)(e))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that fire safety checks are conducted on a regular basis by managers and safe evacuation procedures are practised frequently at different times during the day and evening, involving the child in the home.</p> <p>Additionally, ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures around whistle-blowing and reporting matters to the local authority designated officer following safeguarding allegations.</p> | 28 February 2025 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 30 April 2025    |

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| <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff have the necessary training that is specific to children’s individual needs.</p> <p>In addition, the registered person must also ensure that staff receive regular refresher training in relevant topics.</p>                                               |             |
| <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, reports are to be submitted in a timely manner. These are to be evaluative in content and include the views and opinions of the children, the children’s families, staff and professionals.</p> | 30 May 2025 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, all staff have regular, practice-related supervision that is conducted by someone who is trained in delivering supervision, and that it is recorded in a suitable and timely manner.</p>                       | 30 May 2025 |

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| Additionally, ensure that all staff have regular appraisals that outline personal and professional development. |  |
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## Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that repairs are completed without delay, and that the home is kept clean and tidy throughout. This is not exclusive to, but includes, the rear garden of the home, and to ensure that broken furniture and excess rubbish is disposed of in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

## 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:** SC005751

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Care Afloat Limited

**Registered provider address:** 158-160 Birkrig, Digmoor Parade, Skelmersdale WN8 9HP

**Responsible individual:** Michael Fletcher

**Registered manager:** Claire Russell

## Inspector

Nicola Jeffery, Social Care Inspector

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