

SC006010

Registered provider: Care Afloat Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company operates the home. The home provides care for one child with emotional and social difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there was one child living in the home. The child spoke to the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2025.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 February 2025

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: 23 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/08/2023	Full	Good
11/05/2022	Full	Good
06/05/2021	Full	Good
30/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have built positive relationships with the child, providing them with safe, predictable care. This has meant that the child has stability and a sense of belonging. The child's social worker said, 'This is the longest placement [name of child] has ever had.'

When children move on from the home, they do so with a plan in place. The staff team carefully coordinate the move with the child and external professionals. They obtain the child's views and feelings and support the child accordingly. When children leave the home, staff remain in touch, so that children can access support from familiar adults.

Staff understand the importance of education. The child has been encouraged to attend college and there is regular communication with the placing authority post-16 education adviser. However, due to factors not relating to the home, the child is yet to start on a suitable course. Staff take part in multi-agency meetings regarding the progress and needs of the child and to find the best course for them. One education professional said, 'There is effective communication with the staff team. I always get a response, and they support [name of child] to attend induction days and visits.'

The child's physical and emotional health are promoted and they are encouraged to attend appointments and access services such as child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), My Space and drug and alcohol services. When children smoke, staff provide support and advice on the negative effects of smoking.

Key-worker sessions and significant discussions take place with the child on a range of issues impacting their life. This enables the child to receive advice and guidance on matters important to them and to help them make informed judgements and take ownership of decision-making.

Staff support the child with their independence plan, in line with their age and understanding. The child is encouraged to keep their bedroom tidy, cook basic meals, do their laundry, travel independently and budget for the week ahead. The child carries out tasks independently of staff.

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

The child is safer because of living in the home. The staff understand the child's risks well. Risk assessments and behaviour management plans are clear, regularly reviewed and updated when new needs emerge.

There is effective multi-agency working with a range of professionals through regular care planning meetings and strategy discussions. The child is visited in the home and

their views are sought. These views help inform decisions about the child's care and are central to safety planning.

When the child has been missing from home, staff have taken appropriate action. They ensure that they work with partner agencies such as the police and social workers. They take the initiative to locate and return the child as quickly as possible.

When allegations have been made against staff, these have been reported to external agencies such as the child's placing authority and the local authority designated officer and concerns were appropriately investigated by the manager and senior managers. However, on one occasion, the manager failed to notify Ofsted. A requirement has been raised to this effect.

There has been one incident of self-harm. The child was supported and appropriate treatment administered. However, staff did not show professional curiosity to explore the reasons behind the behaviour or obtain the child's views in a meaningful way which may have led to more support for the child.

The use of physical intervention has not been necessary since the last inspection. When the child is upset and frustrated, staff appropriately seek to find the reasons why by speaking to them, spending time with them, providing clear boundaries and offering appropriate solutions. This helps the child to feel safe and cared for. When consequences are implemented, they are appropriate, reasonable and fair.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified. She works closely with her senior manager and has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. She has taken steps to meet the previous requirements.

Staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals and meet regularly as a team. They have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the child living in the home.

Staff receive regular training, mainly online, with some face-to-face training from specialists, such as CAMHS and therapy providers who work closely with the home.

Staff are happy working at the home. They feel supported by managers. They are familiar with the whistle-blowing procedure and feel confident to report concerns to managers, who they say are always available. As a result, staff retention is good, and the team is stable and consistent.

The manager has internal monitoring systems in place which help her evaluate the effectiveness of staff practice. She values feedback from the independent visitor and implements actions in a timely manner. Some documents are repetitive and staff are duplicating work across documents. The manager was receptive to suggestions for improving this.

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
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4) (a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	28 March 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff's safeguarding skills include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk and supporting children with strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views and support children to understand how to ask for help to stay safe, particularly following any serious incidents which may have taken place. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)

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: SC006010

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Afloat Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Michael Fletcher

Registered manager: June Wilkie

Inspector

Michelle Greenhalgh, 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 looked after children, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 2025