

SC006010

Registered provider: Care Afloat Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one child with emotional and/or behavioural needs. The home is privately owned and forms part of a small social care organisation. The organisation offers an education service and therapeutic support from an external contractor.

The registered manager has been registered since September 2019. She is the registered manager for another home within the organisation.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 22 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2018	Full	Good
01/12/2017	Full	Good
01/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/06/2016	Full	Good

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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and 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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(b)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the child's risk assessments reflect the identified strategies to manage risk consistently; that the staff undertake sufficient checks in the child's bedroom to identify and remove any potential hazards; and, sufficient staffing levels are in place at all times.	07/03/2020
The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that a comprehensive assessment is made to ensure that the home is a suitable placement for a child prior to admission, based on the child's presenting needs.	07/03/2020

The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revision and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days.
(Regulation 16(3)(a)(b) (schedule 1))

07/03/2020

This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the home's statement of purpose reflects the range of needs for whom the home is intended; and the way in which the home has been adapted to meet the needs of the child.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the home (where appropriate) and are encouraged to participate in those activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff provide the child with high-quality personalised care that promotes his needs and welfare. They have nurtured warm, positive relationships with the child, which are based on mutual respect and trust.

The staff's unwavering encouragement and support are helping the child to attend his education provision and engage in his lessons. The staff understand the potential barriers to his learning and work collaboratively with his school and social worker to

monitor his education achievements. As a result, the child is making progress from his starting point.

The staff work effectively with all health professionals to promote the child's physical health and emotional well-being. The staff understand his needs and follow his health plan consistently. The child's health and well-being are carefully monitored to ensure that he receives the right medical advice, support and treatment.

Although the child participates in some exciting activities with the staff, such as indoor sky-diving, opportunities for him to socialise with his peers and make new friends are limited. The way in which the staff support the child to spend time with his friends in a safe environment can improve.

The manager and staff are skilled at developing positive relationships with parents. The child enjoys spending family time at the home in a supportive and safe environment. The staff's committed support is reflected in a parent's comments, '[Name of manager] and the staff are proactive. They go above and beyond what is expected of them.'

Impact risk assessments lack rigour. Consequently, the decisions to admit children to the home are not well informed, which potentially compromises the stability of the placement. For example, one child moved out of the home in an unplanned way because the staff were unable to meet his needs.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There are elements of strong safeguarding practice in this home, for example the staff's swift and thorough response when the child has gone missing from the home. Furthermore, effective partnership working with all safeguarding professionals is increasing the child's welfare and safety.

Despite this, on occasion, inconsistencies in the staff's practice have compromised the child's safety. This is specifically in relation to some staff not providing appropriate levels of supervision to prevent the child from going missing from the home.

The staff's day-to-day care to ensure that the home is free from potential hazards and a safe environment is an area that needs improvement. For example, the staff's routine checks in the home are insufficient. On occasions, staffing levels have not complied with the child's placement plan.

The staff have an in-depth understanding of the child's needs, vulnerabilities and behaviours. However, the home's written risk assessments are at times contradictory. Although this is largely a recording shortfall, the discrepancies found in the written risk assessments could potentially undermine consistent safeguarding practice.

The staff's regular and focused key-work sessions with the child are providing him with the opportunity to think about his actions and understand his risk-taking behaviour. When necessary, the child is linked in with specialist therapeutic services to increase his welfare and safety.

The staff personnel files sampled at the inspection demonstrated safe recruitment practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is extremely child focused. This particular strength is reflected throughout the staff team.

Since the last inspection, the manager has taken sufficient steps to ensure that all staff are working towards the relevant qualification. All but one member of the team are now on target to achieve the relevant qualification in the required timescale. The registered manager's supportive and motivational approach has been instrumental in this area of progress.

A stable and resilient staff team provides a good standard of care to the child. Additionally, the staffing arrangements ensure continuity of care, which is helping the child to build positive relationships with the staff team.

The staff benefit from ongoing support, supervision and guidance, which enable them to provide the child with warm, nurturing and supportive care. Team-working is strong. The staff share information effectively, and their consistent approach helps the child to understand the routines and boundaries that are in place to keep him safe.

Staff's performance is appraised annually, which helps the manager to gain a clear overview of the team's strengths and development needs.

There is evidence of good partnership working with a range of relevant services. The professionals consulted provided positive comments on the registered manager, staff team and standard of care provided to the child.

In the main, the staff are suitably equipped with the knowledge and expertise to fulfil their roles competently. However, staff would benefit from some additional learning opportunities on specific aspects of the child's needs: in particular, autistic spectrum disorder, deprivation of liberty safeguards and domestic abuse.

The manager and staff team have adapted the setting to ensure that the home can comply with the specific aspects of the child's care plan. However, the home's statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect these changes.

Internal and external monitoring systems can be strengthened. Increased rigour in the service monitoring would help the manager to identify shortfalls and continuously improve the home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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, Digmoor Parade, Skelmersdale
WN8 9HP

Responsible individual: Michael Fletcher

Registered manager: Anita Higham

Inspector

Marina Tully, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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