

SC006017

Registered provider: Care Afloat Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home that is registered to care for one child with social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted August 2023. The manager also manages another home for the same provider.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 December 2023

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

Date of last inspection: 14 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2023	Full	Good
12/10/2021	Full	Good
06/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is a stable and consistent team of staff who are committed to ensuring the child's needs are met. The child has made significant progress during their time living at the home and has developed positive relationships with staff who know them well and who talk about them with pride.

Staff provide a supportive and nurturing environment. As a result, the child is developing a secure sense of self-worth. They take pride in their appearance and their health and fitness and are making positive life choices for themselves with the support and guidance of the adults caring for them.

Staff recognise the importance of supporting the child to have age-appropriate and safe friendships. They have been proactive in securing clubs and activities for the child, such as a local football team and joining a local gym.

Family time is supported in line with the child's plan, which takes into account the child's views and wishes. This helps the child to maintain relationships that are important to them.

Currently the child is not in formal education, which is a source of frustration for the child. The staff team have been proactive in working with relevant professionals to progress this and in the interim, have been providing the child with daily tutoring. The deputy manager has challenged the placing authority and the head of the local virtual school regarding the delay in securing an education provision for the child.

When children move into the home they are welcomed sensitively. However, when one child moved into the home, there was no clear assessment processes in place before their placement was agreed. In addition to this, further significant information was made available by the placing authority once the child moved in. There was no reassessment of the information to ensure that the staff team could continue to meet the child's needs in light of the new information.

One child has recently moved on from the home. The manager and staff team supported their move in a compassionate and nurturing way.

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

The child is safe and protected, and their risks have significantly reduced since moving into the home. One family member said that they are happy with the progress the child has made since living in the home and that the staff team looks after the child.

The child said that if they have any worries or problems, they can talk to the staff and they will listen. This encourages them to talk openly about any concerns they may have and helps them to feel safe and cared for.

Staff are child-centred and have a good knowledge and understanding of the child's past experiences. There are robust plans and risk assessments in place that give clear guidance and strategies for staff to follow.

Staff complete regular direct-work sessions and significant discussions with the child; this makes sure that they receive continued support and guidance from the staff team. However, there is a missed opportunity to prepare the child for a smart phone and increase their understanding of the risks associated with internet use and keeping safe online, particularly considering significant historical risks.

The registered manager has completed a review of the locality of the home. However, when a new child moved into the home, this was not revisited to consider any new risks in the local area. In addition to this, the report does not include the views of relevant external professionals.

There are some shortfalls in the home environment, impacting on the general safety of the home. Fire doors have yet to be replaced, despite this being raised at the last inspection. This needs to be addressed without delay.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a registered manager in post who is supported by an experienced deputy manager. They have good oversight of the home and make use of internal and external monitoring systems to improve the care provided in the home.

There is a stable staff team in place, which means that the child benefits from staff who know them well and who can respond to their needs in a consistent manner.

Staff are trained in mandatory subjects. However, some staff require refresher training in behaviour management. Additionally, not all staff have completed training specific to the individual needs of the child, such as internet safety, channel awareness and attachment training.

Staff supervision sessions take place, and a record is kept of these. However, they are not completed regularly, and they are not used to support staff to reflect on practice and behaviours and the impact they may have on the child. This is a missed development opportunity for staff. Not all staff have had their performance appraised within the past year.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. Leaders and managers use team meetings to share information and encourage staff to make suggestions for improvements. They are also used as an opportunity for the staff team to reflect

on significant events. Staff spoken to reported that this is a useful platform to debrief alongside colleagues.

The manager and staff work proactively and positively with external professionals to ensure that children's needs are met and to work towards a common goal of positive outcomes for children. One professional said, '[Name of child] is thriving; they are like a different child.'

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
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that suitable fire doors are installed without delay.	15 December 2023
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— help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)) Specifically, that the registered person ensures that staff complete direct-work sessions with the child that are relevant to their individual risks. In particular, around the use of a smart phone and the internet.	22 December 2023
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's 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	22 January 2024

that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that there are suitable assessments in place before agreeing to a child's placement. In addition to this, when new information is made available, the suitability of a child's placement must be reassessed, taking into full account the new information.	
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff have completed training to meet the child's individual needs. In addition to this, the registered person must ensure that refresher training is completed within a timely manner.	22 January 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))	22 January 2024
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in Regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	22 January 2024

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: SC006017

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: Mark Craven

Inspectors

Michelle Greenhalgh, Social Care Inspector
Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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