

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 who may find it difficult to manage their emotions, which has a negative impact on their behaviour.

The organisation offers an education service and therapeutic support from an external contractor.

There is currently no registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 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	requires improvement to be 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: 12 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2021	Full	Good
06/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
07/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child has lived at the home since January 2021. The child has benefited from living in a solo home with the dedicated care and support of a small group of staff, who know the child well. During this time, the child has made extremely good progress in many aspects of their life.

The child has benefited from a stable placement that has brought about positive change. The child has a positive outlook on life and has been supported well to achieve their aspirations and goals. The child has a very positive attitude towards success and is making good decisions about their life. For example, the child works regular hours at a local restaurant and has set up their own beauty related business. A parent said, 'Staff have given [the child] security and a foundation on which to build. [Name of child] has a very positive future and staff have contributed a lot to this.'

Staff have been highly influential in helping the child to prepare for adulthood. Opportunities to develop essential life skills and lead an independent lifestyle are part of everyday life. Progress in this respect is significant, with the child requiring very little adult support beyond that of a good parent. This means that the child is well prepared and ready for their very imminent move to semi-independent living.

Staff recognise the importance of age-appropriate friendships. They have established good links with the child's peer groups and their parents. This has enabled the child to build and maintain positive friendships and enjoy the same social experiences as their peers.

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

The child demonstrates an age-appropriate awareness of risk. The child makes the right choices about keeping safe. There have been no serious incidents, safeguarding concerns or allegations since the last inspection.

The previous manager and staff have failed to recognise and manage the potential risks when visitors are in the home. This is in relation to persons visiting for the child's beauty business. There is no record of who these people are, and staff have not provided adequate levels of supervision. There is no evidence that the child has been harmed, and the current manager took immediate action to address this when taking over the home.

Staff are positive role models and take a parent-like approach to behaviour management. The child is respectful of staff and the rules of the home. Negotiation and compromise are used effectively to promote self-responsibility and positive behaviour, without the need for consequences or physical holds.

The home does not have a policy that outlines the criteria for determining that staff are competent to lone work. This has the potential to present a risk to children and staff who may not have sufficient skills. For example, a relatively new member of staff, who has lone worked, was unable to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of managing an allegation.

A range of health and safety risk assessments and checks are carried out. Overall, these are effective in maintaining a safe environment. However, the fire risk assessment has not been completed by a suitably trained person. As a result, the manager cannot be sure that suitable measures, in particular the fire doors, are in place to protect children and staff in the event of a fire.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager left the home in January 2022. A manager was quickly identified but left before registering with Ofsted. The current manager has been in post since October 2022. He is experienced and suitably qualified. The manager is in the process of submitting his application to register for this home.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and recognises where improvements need to be made. He is working to a well-thought-out improvement plan that is based on an audit completed by him and another experienced registered manager. This plan is being implemented at a sensible pace, but there is already good evidence of positive changes to systems and processes.

The care of the child has remained a consistent priority. There has been minimal change in the staff team, which provides good continuity of care. Staff are positive about the previous manager but also recognise that, at times, there was a lack of management presence and leadership. Conversely, staff are highly impressed with the current manager, who is visible and a positive role model for staff. One staff member said, 'Since [name of manager] took over, I feel safer and have become more confident. He is preparing the team for the next child and, as a team, we are recognising that we need to be different.'

Overall, staff have benefited from regular and mostly purposeful supervision. The manager is in the process of arranging annual appraisals for staff, some of which are significantly overdue. This is also the case with some mandatory training refreshers. These are essential for staff who are preparing for the next child who is coming into the home, and who is likely to need significantly more support than the current child.

Suitable action has been taken to address the requirement and two recommendations from the previous inspection.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(b)) Specifically, ensure that a record of any person visiting the home is maintained and, after checking their identity, appropriate levels of supervision are maintained throughout their visit.	22 March 2023
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b)) Specifically, ensure that the home's fire risk assessment is completed by a suitably trained person to determine the effectiveness of current measures, in particular the fire doors.	22 March 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff know what steps to take in the event of an allegation or safeguarding concern. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person should ensure that staff complete or refresh any outstanding mandatory training. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a policy that clearly states the criteria for determining that staff are competent to lone work. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.21)
- The registered person should ensure that annual appraisals are completed for those staff who have not had their performance reviewed in the last year. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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M1 2WD

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