

SC008484

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that is registered to care for up to six children with emotional and social difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2022.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2023

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: 13 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2021	Full	Good
12/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/06/2019	Full	Good
23/10/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is warm and welcoming. Children's artwork and photos of the children are displayed around the home. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their taste. Children feel comfortable and relaxed in the home.

The children have positive relationships with staff and the manager. Staff listen to children's wishes and feelings. Children are supported to understand the decisions that are made for them. This allows children to develop and maintain positive relationships with the adults who care for them.

The manager and staff promote children's overall experiences and progress. External professionals note the positive way in which staff engage with children to improve their opportunities and experiences in life. A social worker commented, 'They [staff] engaged with her very quickly. [Name of child] expresses herself better. The impact on her was amazing. It has changed [name of child]'s trajectory.'

All the children receive education. One child has been supported to engage with home tuition while waiting to move to a local school. Children are making progress in education while living in the home.

Children's health needs are met. Children are provided with a healthy diet and lifestyle. Children have a say in meal choices, and one child is being supported to develop independence around shopping and cooking.

Children engage in activities with staff and other children in the home that are varied and fun. Children attend clubs and activities, such as Brownies and football. This supports the development of relationships and a sense of belonging to the local community.

Staff support children to spend time with their family. This is important to the children and helps them retain a strong sense of identity. Staff help to make sure this is a safe and positive experience.

The staff and manager understand the plans for the children in their care. They have supported two children moving from the home and have done this well. The manager takes steps to ensure that the needs of children moving into the home are also carefully considered.

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

Staff understand each child's individual needs. The children receive good-quality care and support. Plans that manage risk are clear and updated regularly. Staff

understand the risks for the children and respond appropriately. The arrangements for their everyday care keep them safe from harm.

Staff work hard to help children understand potential risks, such as online safety and child exploitation. Children feel able to talk to staff about their worries, and they feel that staff listen to them. Children feel increasingly safe as a result of living in the home.

Communication between the staff and external professionals, such as children's social workers, is positive. Information is shared in a timely manner. Therefore, children are offered support and kept safe.

Children are provided with a safe environment to live. Potential risks are minimised through consistent monitoring by the manager and staff. An assessment that considers risks associated with the location of the home is in place. The staff know the area well and can help ensure that children are kept safe.

The leadership team completes checks for the safe recruitment of staff. This helps to ensure that children are cared for by adults who are appropriately vetted.

The children receive clear and consistent boundaries. Children are rewarded for positive behaviour. Consequences are proportionate, and children are clear why they are in place. Children feel included, safe and have choices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager knows the children well and ensures that the plans for individual children identify their needs. The plans consider the local authorities' plans for children. This helps to ensure that children's needs are met.

New members of staff said that their induction has been helpful and effective. Induction activities focus on ensuring that staff can keep children safe and meet their specific needs.

Leaders and managers work positively with other agencies, professionals and parents and have built very effective working relationships. A social worker for one of the children said, 'They are amazing, responsive and have great communication with me and the school.' This contact helps to secure positive outcomes for the children.

The manager puts a great deal of thought into enhancing the children's knowledge around issues of equality and diversity. The children have taken part in events such as Pride Month, and they have completed some work around mental health awareness. This enables the children to have a greater understanding about the discrimination that some people face and learn acceptance for differences.

Most of the staff have regular, supportive supervision. However, some part-time staff members have not received individual supervision for some time. This means

they may have not regularly had the opportunity to reflect on their work with the children.

The independent visitor does not always visit the home when the children are there and does not always speak with relevant professionals or parents. This means that their reports lack external validation of what they find on their visits.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The responsible person should ensure that all staff, including staff who are on temporary or zero-hour contracts, receive regular reflective supervision of their practice and can have their practice and job role appraised in line with the company's policies. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's independent visitor is seeking external validation from professionals who know the children and family members and that they visit the home at times when they will be able to observe and speak with the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: SC008484

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual: Judith Power

Registered manager: Marc Killen

Inspectors

Jenni Gadsby, Social Care Inspector
Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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