

SC011185

Registered provider: Calcot Services for Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to seven children with complex social and emotional difficulties. Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. Staff are referred to as adults throughout the report.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2023.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 May 2024

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: 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
31/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
21/07/2021	Full	Outstanding
28/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make continued progress while living in the home and have positive and trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Adults talk fondly and therapeutically about the children; they understand their individual needs and the trauma they have experienced. Social workers and parents are highly complimentary about the care children receive, even when children have moved out earlier than planned.

Children are held central to decision-making, and their views are essential in the day-to-day running of the home. The culture in the home is open and accepting of all differences. This home has a prayer and reflection room, and consistent support is given to children when they are exploring who they are, including being a looked after child. Family time is well supported, including when travelling long distances and ensuring that this time is positive and safe for children.

In the main, children attend school full time. Close liaison with school staff ensures that there is consistent support for children. When children struggle to engage in formal education, teachers are welcomed into the home to educate them and to encourage them to return to a formal education environment. Adults encourage and support children to enjoy education-based activities during the day, while acknowledging that the impact of trauma means children may, at times, struggle to engage.

Children take part in rewarding activities in the home. They enjoy games in the garden and learn vital skills about turn-taking and teamwork. Children also enjoy activities in the community, playing instruments in a rock band club and attending youth clubs.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles and what this means for them. The organisation's therapist visits the home, meeting with the children and adults individually. This helps children overcome any stigma or anxiety they feel about therapy. Additionally, adults have strong links with child and adolescent mental health services to support children's emotional well-being.

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

Children are confident in their home. They know that adults want them to be safe and readily approach them with worries or concerns. Children identify adults they can go to if they are worried or upset. Adults are attuned to the children's emotional well-being, supporting them well if they are becoming upset or angry.

Adults know how to respond to any safeguarding concerns and understand each child's vulnerabilities well. Close liaison with partner agencies and the local authority designated officer means that concerns are reported swiftly.

Children's plans are clear about how to respond should they go missing from the home. Adults follow and look for the children if they leave the home without permission, and call on police assistance when needed. Children are always welcomed back warmly, and given the space to share how they are feeling.

Adults understand that behaviour is a means of communication. They work tirelessly to support children to reflect on how they are feeling and on what may have led to them showing behaviours of distress. Even under the most challenging circumstances, adults care deeply about the children and have been sad to see them move on when their placements have had to end.

Adults use a reward system to support positive behaviour. However, this is not applied consistently due to adults' differing understanding of the system.

Physical interventions are rarely used in the home. The home can be divided into two houses, and this can be used to keep children separated if they are struggling emotionally. Should the door be locked to separate the home into two, this is recorded with the reasons why and only done for the shortest time necessary. This reduces the need for children to be physically held, and they can work through their emotions without impacting on other children.

Children are protected from being cared for by unsuitable people through safer recruitment practice. The environment is well maintained, and children know how to respond if the fire alarm sounds.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is well managed by a caring and therapeutically minded registered manager. Adults are well supported; they learn the ethos of the home and how to care for the children through the role modelling of the management team. Adults understand the therapeutic approach and talk positively about each child and how it works for them.

Training is individualised to the needs of the children who are living in the home. Adults have varied opportunities to develop their skills and learning and can request refresher or new training should they require it. However, a child has moved into the home with a diagnosed condition that not all adults are yet trained in understanding. This has had minimal impact on the child due to the nature of the ethos and approach to care in the home.

Adults in the home are unanimously positive about the support and supervision they receive from the management team. It is a new team of adults, learning to work together. Adults are enthusiastic about the process of joint working and providing consistent care for children.

The managers have excellent relationships with partner agencies and the multi-disciplinary teams supporting children. This provides the children with stability that they

have not experienced when living in other homes. Adults constantly advocate for the children and provide challenge when they feel partner agencies are not meeting children's needs.

Children's plans are centred around their individual needs and communication style. The plans are regularly reviewed to ensure that children are making progress or receiving additional support in areas where they struggle. A newly developed approach to progress monitoring not only provides key information but is used to develop practice to increase children's participation in developing new skills.

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 care planning standard is that children receive well-planned care from the home and have a positive experience of admission and transition processes. 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, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, ensure that all staff have the training to meet children's needs prior to them moving into the home.	28 June 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff fully understand the organisation's rewards system and how this is reviewed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 40, paragraph 8.11)

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: SC011185

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Calcot Services for Children Limited

Registered provider address: Advantage, 87 Castle Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7SN

Responsible individual: Robin Ward

Registered manager: Helen Taylor

Inspectors

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector
Sharron Dormand, 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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