

SC013144

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short-break children's home cares for up to six children. The service is provided by a national charity in partnership with the local authority. The home's statement of purpose states that most of the children using the service have complex needs and/or have autism spectrum disorder.

The home has not had a registered manager since 31 March 2022.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 August 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	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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

Date of last inspection: 15 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/08/2022	Full	Good
20/09/2021	Full	Good
21/05/2019	Full	Good
13/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children develop secure and trusting relationships with the staff caring for them. Staff are attentive and nurturing in their approach to meeting children's individual needs. Because of this, children are well cared for and have fun.

Children make good progress with their health, education and well-being. Some children have been able to learn self-care tasks at the home. Other children have been able to better engage with activities or attend school with fewer incidents. Children enjoy their stays at the home, and there is clear evidence of the positive impact their time at the home has on their lives. Children are given the opportunity to engage in a range of activities, for example arts and crafts, puzzles and playing on the trampoline. Staff, including agency staff, support children to do these activities through their knowledge of each child.

Children are supported effectively when they move on from the home, and they are well prepared for their future or other residential placements. Staff ensure that children's successes are celebrated, for example through memory books. However, children's achievements are not always showcased within the home.

Children's needs are well understood by staff who are attentive to any changes outside of their usual presentations. Children's anxieties, as communicated through behaviours, are well documented through incident reports.

Staff have a sound understanding of children's communication methods and their preferences. Parents told the inspectors that their children are well understood and very well cared for by staff. One parent said, 'I'm amazed by the home. The staff are so welcoming. They know [name of child] as a person not a number – an absolute godsend.'

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

Leaders and managers understand the statutory requirements around safeguarding and ensure that staff keep children safe from harm. There are clear processes and systems that are followed when allegations are made. This protects children from harm and promotes their welfare.

Staff know and understand the processes for reporting safeguarding issues. Staff respond well to children when they need support and use the positive relationships they have with them to manage incidents effectively.

Risks to children who may go missing from care are safely managed. Staff understand the risk assessments to keep children safe from going missing, and parents give signed consent for control measures such as locking entrance doors.

CCTV is used to monitor and safeguard some children who have complex needs. Children's individualised plans detail why this approach is used. Consent for this is sought from families and professionals, and cameras are not routinely used for all children or during personal care. The home has waking night staff who monitor the CCTV, but this does not replace visual checks on children who stay at the home.

There is a robust process for recording and administering medication. A strong auditing system has helped to improve the process for recording when medicines come into and leave the building. This means children can receive their prescribed medicines safely.

Leaders and managers keep an overview of any safety concerns and ensure that any improvement works are carried out. There is a system for maintaining equipment and facilities, and this is safely managed using external contractors where needed.

Leaders and managers are aware of their responsibility to recruit staff safely. Recruitment records are kept centrally and reviewed by senior staff. This ensures that only appropriately vetted individuals work at the home and provide care for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home has been without a registered manager since March 2022. Since this time, three managers covered the vacant position, with senior managers and the responsible individual keeping oversight of the home. The current manager has been managing the home since March 2023 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Leaders and managers are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and the manager has prioritised monitoring systems of children's files. However, some children's files have not been updated. This has not impacted on the care that children receive, but there is a risk that new staff may not have the correct information about children.

Children are cared for by a stable staff team. Staff are skilled and knowledgeable about the individual needs of the children who visit the home. The provider is introducing a new online training portal for staff, but some staff training has not been updated in a timely way.

Staff show sensitivity when managing the arrival of new children into the home and provide support to families well. For example, children visit for tea before their overnight stays. One professional said, 'Staff will do their best for every child and young person they support. When I visit young people at the home, they are always happy and well cared for.'

Senior managers have taken action to ensure that there are sufficient staff on duty to meet children's needs, despite the challenges of maintaining a full complement of staff. The safe care of children is maintained when changes to new children accessing the service and occupancy rates have been made.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, managers should keep care records accurate and up to date.	6 October 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and they 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 ensure that staff fully recognise and celebrate the achievements of their children by showcasing them throughout the home for children to see. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.7)

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: SC013144

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Registered provider address: Barnardo House, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Cara Atkinson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Stephen Challis, Social Care Inspector
Hannah Cox, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2023