

SC014235

Registered provider: Lioncare Limited operating as The Lioncare Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to seven children who have social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 25 February 2016.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

A monitoring visit was carried out on 3 February 2021, following an increase in notifications received by Ofsted, which resulted in no enforcement action. The report is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 9 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/05/2019	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children benefit from excellent care provided by an effective, skilled and dedicated staff team. This is based on an in-depth understanding of each child's needs and children's individual day-to-day experiences of living in the home. Staff are committed to developing positive relationships with each child. They are persistent and enthusiastic in their approach which helps children to develop trusting relationships. Staff exemplify the home's therapeutic approach and put their extensive training into practice. Children receive high-quality care and support from a warm staff team that will work tenaciously to understand how best to provide this.

Children's health needs are based on the comprehensive assessments completed by the team. Staff have a thorough understanding of how children's physical and emotional needs are connected. Staff support children to understand how these needs are sometimes expressed through a child's behaviour. Children are also provided with external specialist therapeutic support alongside support from staff.

Staff help children to make positive choices. One child provided an example of how staff have helped them to find different ways to cope with their angry feelings. This has resulted in a decrease in physical aggression due to the new skills the child has developed. For another child, the restorative justice approach of the staff team has helped them to recognise the impact of their aggressive behaviour on another child. Through the systematic response of the team, the child was able to change their behaviour. The team helped each child to receive the right support at the right time, which will be of benefit to them in the future.

The commitment to children's education is demonstrated through the substantial support provided by the staff team. Children enjoy learning and their achievements are consistently celebrated with certificates displayed around the home. Children show real pride in their achievements. The focus on learning is embedded within the staff team, which created new ways to help children continue to learn while at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff always ensure that children are helped to voice their wishes, feelings and views. Children are supported to lead group 'get togethers' where they talk about what is important to them. Staff skilfully help children to listen to one another and reach agreements on changes to the home. This helps children to see that what they say really matters and, importantly, how this makes a difference to their day-to-day lives.

Staff actively promote independent advocacy and support children to access this.

Fun activities are an integral part of the children's positive experiences. Children enjoy the weekly quiz evenings which started during the pandemic. Staff give real

thought to individual interests, which will support each child's sense of self. Children are supported to join a wide variety of different clubs and groups. Through this, children are helped to develop positive friendships both in and outside of the home.

Children's relationships with their families are sensitively supported. Staff have a real understanding of the significance of these relationships and how these impact on children's well-being. Staff ensure that, where possible, children have been supported to spend quality time with their family, including throughout the pandemic. Where this is not possible, children's sense of loss is understood and responded to empathically by the staff, who help children to develop skills to talk about their feelings rather than showing it through their behaviour.

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

Staff have good understanding of the vulnerabilities and identified risks for each child. The comprehensive risk management plans provide detailed guidance on strategies to manage known risks. This helps staff in their approach to children and informs the care they provide. Children are involved in developing their individual plans and this assists them to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Children directly contribute to the home's location risk assessment. This helps them gain a wider understanding of any known potential risks outside of the home.

There has been a noted decrease in the need for the team to use physical interventions in response to concerns about a child's behaviour. Staff have a good understanding of the impact of their own behaviour, which is based on nurturing relationships with children. The restorative justice approach embedded within the team helps children to understand their rights and responsibilities. Restorative meetings held by staff show children how to repair relationships with each other. This also helps to prevent further incidents between children.

New staff receive a thorough induction with extensive training. They develop a detailed understanding of the identified risks for each child and how to effectively respond to these. There are detailed job descriptions provided to staff as part of the organisation's comprehensive recruitment process. However, there was one example where a job description did not provide clarity in terms of the expectations of the role. This did not relate to a role working directly with children.

There has been a reduction in the number of allegations made against staff since the last inspection. This reflects the hard work of the staff and management team in helping children to talk about difficult past experiences. This is based on staff having a sound understanding of how children experience past trauma, which can impact how they respond to the care they receive. There continues to be effective working relationships with statutory agencies. This includes collaborative working together with the designated officer for managing allegations.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager demonstrates excellent leadership based on a clear and sustained focus on providing the best quality of care and experiences for children. The manager is systematic in their approach and tenacious in ensuring that children are helped to access all the support they are entitled to. Through collaborative and effective working with services, the registered manager ensures that children receive the specific help they need. The registered manager's strong advocacy skills and commitment to all children living in, and moving on from, the home have a demonstrable, positive impact.

Together with the highly effective deputy manager, the management team has embedded an exemplary child-centred culture. The registered manager and deputy are respected by both staff and children. Both equally maintain an appropriate level of excellent individual direct work with children. Staff describe the home as being like a 'family'. The nurture and support provided by the management team is reflective of the family environment that has been created in the home.

The retention of staff is noteworthy and management support provided for staff's emotional well-being is a particular strength. Staff are supported well to effectively manage the emotional impact of their role. This includes individual supervision, group supervision and additional support put in place for staff's emotional well-being during the pandemic. Children benefit from a staff team that acts in their best interests consistently and considers how to meet the children's needs.

Supervision for staff is effective in providing a regular space for the team members to reflect on their individual practice. Overall, this is recorded well. However, there were a small number of supervision records which did not fully reflect all discussions held with the members of staff. This is important as it relates to practice issues.

The home is a welcoming environment with the inspiring addition of a 'soft' playroom. In the design and development of the home environment, the registered manager and responsible individual work very effectively together. There are ambitious plans for continued development of the home and gardens. The responsible individual has a sound understanding of the needs of the children and staff team. They provide additional and direct support to staff, which has been particularly appreciated during the pandemic. The shared therapeutic ethos of the home is evident in the approach of the management and leadership team.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice. In particular, that job descriptions provide clarity of expectations for roles where staff are not responsible for the care of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b) and that it reflects discussions held with the individual staff member. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

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: SC014235

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lioncare Limited operating as The Lioncare Group

Registered provider address: 58a Livingstone Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 3WL

Responsible individual: Matthew Vince

Registered manager: Sarah Jackson

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, Social Care Inspector

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