

SC015254

Registered provider: Castle Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private specialist education service. It provides care for up to five children aged eight to 18. The home seeks to provide a safe and understanding ethos in which children can be assisted to address their abusive behaviour and to take responsibility for their own actions. The emphasis of the work is by way of intervention to challenge the inappropriate behaviour.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2012.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 August 2018

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	outstanding
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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: 31 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/09/2016	Full	Outstanding
16/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make excellent progress. The children have built secure, positive relationships with a highly skilled and dedicated staff team. Children receive highly individualised care from committed staff. The staff want the children to have the best possible experiences and outcomes and ensure that this happens. This enhances the opportunities for children and enables the children to flourish.

Children fully engage with specialist therapeutic support. This support, and the support that the children receive from staff, enables them to make exceptional progress emotionally, socially and behaviourally. The children understand that the staff receive the therapist's reports following sessions. Excellent communication between the professionals involved in the children's care enables the children to have ongoing support from staff between therapy sessions if they wish.

The highly experienced and dedicated staff team helps children to confront and understand their past traumas. Children make exceptional progress in taking responsibility and understanding the effects that their actions have on others. The positive, secure relationships that the children have with staff enable them to talk about their experiences prior to coming to the home. This means that the children can confront their feelings and move on positively with their lives.

Educational attendance and academic progress of children from their starting points is excellent. Communication between education staff and the home is strong. The staff understand the importance of education and it is incorporated into the children's daily lives. This has led to children developing high aspirations and a sense of achievement.

The staff are committed to children being able to learn independence skills, to prepare them for adulthood. A member of staff researched the impact on children's self-esteem and sense of belonging when involved in chores around the home. This is now incorporated into children's daily lives. Children have a great sense of pride in their home.

Children say that they are happy in the home because they have a choice of lots of activities and enjoy spending time with staff. One child commented, 'This is the best house ever because the staff are funny, you can have a laugh with them and they just get me.'

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

The consistent implementation of effective safeguarding policies and excellent knowledge and understanding of the importance of reporting concerns mean that the children are kept safe.

Children say that they feel safe living in the house because of the staff. A child commented that there are always staff around and they get help if they are upset or worried about anything.

The effective implementation of high-quality risk assessments actively ensures that children are safe. Children regularly review their risk assessments with staff during key-work sessions. The children understand why risks may change and what they need to do to manage or reduce these.

The staff understand that children need to have purposeful and meaningful experiences while learning to manage risks. Children, in consultation with their social workers, work towards having short periods of free time in the community. One child was very proud to say that he now has free time and attends several clubs in the area independently. This shows that the staff are not risk averse. The staff continually talk about how to stay safe in key-work sessions.

One child has gone missing for a short period of time since the last inspection. Staff searched the local area and followed the child's individual protocol. On his return, he was supported by staff, completed a key-work session and received a return to home interview from his social worker the following day. The staff are proactive when children are missing, provide good support on their return and reassess any risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager strives for continuous improvement and actively researches effective approaches to support this. As part of staff development, the manager asks staff to complete research on good practice. This is then adapted and incorporated into the home.

There are regular staff meetings and training sessions that support the staff in working with the children. These regular meetings ensure that the staff are kept fully updated about the children and further embeds good practice. This ensures that the children receive excellent care and support.

The staff work hard to understand and respond to children's views. Regular house meetings take place. The manager responds to these and children are able to see what has happened because of the discussions. The manager frequently consults with children, their families and professionals. Children are involved in staff appraisals and recruitment. This gives them a strong sense of belonging.

The manager recognises the importance of children being involved in the village community. Children attend all village events, including weekly bingo in the village hall. They raise money for a local hearing dog charity and complete regular litter picks with local residents. This gives children a great understanding of community life and responsibilities. The children are proud of being part of their community and this is evident when they speak about their involvement.

The manager has effective communication with social workers and other professionals. This holistic approach means that she has been able to successfully challenge actions or proposed actions that are not in the best interest of the child, or fails to offer them the service that they deserve. This robust approach helps to ensure that children receive the care needed to support their progress.

A social worker commented, 'This home is phenomenal, the manager and staff really

care about the children. I do not know where he [the child] would be without their support.'

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC015254

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Castle Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Fifth Floor, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Michelle Smith

Registered manager: Helen Llewellyn

Inspector

Trish Palmer: social care inspector

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