

SC020151

Registered provider: Country Care Children's Homes Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 10 December 2019

Date of last inspection: 25 June 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

This interim inspection was carried out due to concerns and complaints about staff conduct.

Overall, leaders and managers provide excellent management oversight and they model good childcare practice. However, some staff have failed in their duty of care towards children. This has jeopardised children's safety and well-being. The staff members involved are no longer employed within the children's home.

This has been a difficult period and it has had an impact on the children living at the home, managers, staff and stakeholders. However, managers have demonstrated rigour in their safeguarding practice and have responded immediately when concerns have emerged. Partnership work with the designated safeguarding officer, Ofsted and placing authorities has been prompt and transparent. This has led to immediate action to safeguard children.

Arrangements to ensure that there is a highly skilled and qualified workforce remain strong. Staff benefit from comprehensive training and a focus on their professional development.

The supervision of staff has been consistent, and staff receive the support they need. However, supervision is not always reflective and does not always give enough consideration to the needs of the children. Supervision discussions do not adequately explore concerns and allegations, and the lines of accountability are not always clear. Potential conflicts of interest have not always been recognised.

Children who are newly admitted to the home are carefully matched and introductions are managed with sensitivity. Children have improved outcomes because of the care provided. They benefit from well-planned transitions to foster care, home or independence.

Children make progress because of the care and support they receive. The provider has a highly performing on-site school. Children benefit from bespoke and creative indoor and outdoor education.

Children have access to 24-hour therapeutic support. This is due to the integrated therapeutic provision and therapeutically trained workforce. Over time, children learn to deal with trauma and improve their emotional self-regulation. This supports improved overall progress.

The home has several ways of consulting with and listening to children. However, at

the time of this inspection, not all the children felt that their views and wishes were considered. Managers have acknowledged this and have put plans in place to improve advocacy and consultation.

Leaders and managers ensure that high standards of care are maintained. Systematic monitoring of how well the home functions is effective. Internal and external quality assurance highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The registered manager monitors the progress of children and can demonstrate improved outcomes.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/06/2019	Full	Good
07/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
22/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
14/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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, 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 registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	06/01/2020

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted up upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- All children must have access to appropriate advocacy support, and where possible this should be provided by a person that the child chooses. Looked-after children are entitled to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities and what they are authorised to decide on their own initiative. There should be clear lines of accountability. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20) This is with specific reference to supervision arrangements and reporting of allegations when staff are friends, family or any other potential conflict of interest.
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: SC020151

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Country Care Children's Homes Limited

Responsible individual: Rachel Dowle

Registered manager: Janine Morrell

Inspector

Amanda Ellis, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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