

SC020576

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to five children who have experienced trauma.

The registered manager is suitably skilled and experienced and has been in post since 2016.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 23 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2021	Full	Good
05/02/2020	Full	Good
07/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. Since the last inspection, one child has left the home and one child has moved in. Children settle here long term, and they make good progress. One child has lived at the home for two years, and the child who left had lived there for three years before moving to semi-independent accommodation.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and the progress that they make. Overall, staff know the children very well and they have positive relationships with children. During inspection, warm interactions were seen between the children and staff. The open and honest communication means that the children can discuss worries and concerns and continue to develop positive relationships.

Staff work hard to have positive relationships with the people who are important to children. They have a good understanding of family dynamics, and they support children's relationships in line with their wishes. As a result, children's emotional well-being is improved, and they retain a sense of identity with their families.

Both children attend school and staff do everything they can to support children's education. They help children with their homework and regularly communicate with teachers about children's behaviours and routines. When children are unsettled, staff work with teachers to settle them. As a result of this strong partnership working, both children are progressing at school from their starting points.

Staff sensitively support children with their health and well-being. Children have access to therapeutic sessions with the home's clinician. The staff are also supported by the clinician to establish appropriate approaches to support children's emotional health and well-being. As a result of this individualised care, children begin to confidently talk about their emotions and their mental health improves.

Children receive exceptionally well-planned care. Staff support children to engage in meetings and to contribute to their plans. Staff regularly review child-friendly placement plans with children to ensure that they fully understand their targets and goals. Additionally, staff encourage children to set their own targets and goals. This helps children to invest in their progress and to take pride in their achievements.

The communal areas of the home are comfortable, and they reflect children's hobbies and interests. Children are extremely proud of their bedrooms, which are highly personalised. However, other areas of the home have an institutional feel. There is a fire exit sign above the front door and a fire extinguisher is in a prominent position at the top of the staircase. Signs instructing children how to wash their hands and alerting children to the danger of hot water were clearly displayed. These

were removed during the inspection. A noticeboard in the dining room and a visible lock on a cupboard in the bathroom add to the institutional feel of the home.

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

Incidents in the home are rare and staff have not used physical restraint to manage children's complex behaviours since the last inspection. Regular consultations with clinicians are effective in improving staff practice. This allows staff to understand the reasons behind some behaviours and provides a nurturing environment for the children.

Staff follow the principles of restorative practice. Staff manage inappropriate behaviour through natural consequences, which helps children to take responsibility and learn from their behaviour.

Managers ensure that children who are new to the home are well matched with those already living there, and their risks are fully understood. Staff then ensure that children live safely together. Children have not reported bullying in the home, which demonstrates how settled and protected they feel.

Staff have regular discussions with children about being safe. They use online resources with children to discuss topics such as online safety, child sexual exploitation and self-harming behaviours. This approach enhances children's feelings of safety and security.

The staff manage children's behaviour through restrictive practices. For instance, staff manage a child's risks by restricting access to their bedroom by locking their bedroom door. The reasons for this are not clear and this practice is not risk assessed. Locking internal doors imposes controls on children's liberty and does not allow them access all areas of their home.

Managers do not routinely review the necessity of using monitoring devices to safeguard children. Alarms on bedroom doors are set at night and a wall-mounted mirror is used to monitor children's movements into and out of their bedrooms. Managers have not completed a rigorous assessment of children's needs to support the requirement for this measure. This is potentially an unnecessary intrusion on children's privacy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has a registered manager and a deputy manager. The manager has worked at the home for seven years and has been a consistent presence in the lives of both children. The manager and the deputy work well together. They have an open-door policy to ensure that they are available to staff and children.

Staff say the manager is 'brilliant' and that the home is a place where you want to come to work. Staff morale is high and staff turnover is minimal. No agency or bank staff have been used since the last inspection and any shortfalls in staffing are

covered by existing staff and the manager. As a result of this exceptionally consistent care, children have close and trusting relationships with adults who know them well.

The well-motivated staff receive regular reflective supervision and consistent support. Most staff hold the required level 3 diploma and receive a wide range of training that informs their practice and meets children's individual needs. New staff are supported by a thorough and well-planned induction, which includes being supported by a mentor. As a result, children receive high-quality care from skilled and well-informed staff who are fully invested in children's progress.

The manager continuously reviews the quality of care that children receive. They submit detailed reports to the regulator and set ambitious targets to ensure ongoing improvements. However, on one occasion, the manager was not professionally curious about an incident when a child self-harmed. This resulted in a delay in staff understanding a child's risks, and in the child receiving relevant support.

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 ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that restrictions on children's access to their bedrooms are risk assessed and regularly reviewed with the child and their social worker.	22 April 2023
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and	22 April 2023

the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that when devices such as a wall-mounted mirror are used to monitor children's movements in the home, this is risk assessed, and that children's social workers and, where appropriate, children are consulted.	
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)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that they are professionally curious in reviewing incidents when children are at risk.	22 April 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children and is a homely, domestic environment, and should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.9)

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: SC020576

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Sophie Nicholls

Registered manager: Deborah Bassett

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, 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