

# SC020576

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company and registered with Ofsted in February 1999. The home is registered to provide care for up to five children who may have specific emotional needs and may have experienced trauma.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2016. She is suitably qualified and experienced.

At the time of inspection, three children were living in the home. All were present and spoken to.

### Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 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:** 29 October 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 29/10/2024      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 19/03/2024      | Full            | Good                            |
| 06/03/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 23/06/2021      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

At the time of inspection, there were three children living in the home. They have lived in the home for several years and are very settled. No children have moved in or out of the home since the last inspection. The children are making good progress, and there are good structures in place to help keep them safe.

Children said that they are happy living in the home. They have built trusting relationships with the staff, who are nurturing and have helped them to grow. One child has recently been supported to go out independently, which has had a significant impact on their self-confidence. They have demonstrated maturity and shown they can be trusted. As a result, staff are working to increase the child's independence time further.

Staff support children to understand the importance of education. All children are in regular attendance. When children struggle to engage in education, staff work with educational professionals to find alternative strategies to keep them engaged. This has been particularly successful for one child in helping them to make good progress.

Children are supported to develop their independence skills. One child is due to move out from the home this year. Staff are working with them to help build their skills and confidence in managing various aspects of their life and to keep safe.

The home environment is warm and welcoming. It is well maintained and furnished to a good standard. The children's rooms are personalised and contain items that are personal to them. This provides children with a sense of belonging.

Staff ensure that children have positive experiences and participate in regular activities. Children are encouraged to share their preferences for more significant experiences, such as holidays and day trips. However, staff are not always prompt in acting on children's choices. This does not provide the assurance to children that their wishes will always be listened to and taken forward.

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

Staff provide children with clear routines and boundaries in the home. Staff are consistent in their approach, which helps children to understand what is expected of them. As a result, incidents are rare. These consistent boundaries help children to feel safe and secure.

The registered manager ensures that staff are skilled in understanding and managing children's anxieties. When one child was distressed, staff took the time to understand the reasons and took action to alleviate their concerns. This gives children confidence that staff will listen to their concerns and take action to keep them safe.

Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They shared the actions they would take should children go missing from the home or if they make an allegation. As a result, staff have the knowledge and confidence to take action to reduce children's risks and vulnerabilities.

Staff work well with professionals to implement plans that help children to remain safe. For example, when children are first given a phone or spend time out in the community, staff put plans in place to monitor children's safety. In addition, staff take time to speak with children to help them understand their safety plans. Children respond well to this approach and grow in confidence.

Safe recruitment processes are in place. Appropriate checks are carried out on new staff before they work at the home. This ensures that children are cared for by suitably vetted staff.

Staff have implemented a system to promote positive behaviour in the home. Consequences are appropriate and proportionate when used. However, while staff are looking to review the reward system, it currently lacks effectiveness due to its infrequent use and potentially unobtainable goals.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The home is led by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager, who is supported by a stable staff team. Most of the staff hold the relevant qualification and have many years' experience of supporting children. Consequently, children are cared for by a consistent team of staff, who have the skills and knowledge for the role.

Feedback from professionals is positive in their praise of the manager and the support staff provide for children. Professionals say that children are making progress and are settled and that there is good communication with staff.

Leaders and managers have taken action to address the requirements and recommendations that were raised at the last inspection. Actions taken and improvements made have had a positive impact on children's well-being and experiences. This demonstrates the manager's commitment to improving the quality of care children receive.

Staff receive support and guidance to help them care for the children. This includes regular supervision sessions and appraisals, which give staff an opportunity to reflect on their learning and development needs. New staff receive a comprehensive induction programme, and staff have recently been provided with child-specific training to upskill them.

The systems for monitoring and providing oversight of the home are generally effective in helping to maintain standards and keep children safe. Children's views are sought, and children's plans and risk assessments are regularly updated to ensure they are current.

However, leaders do not have clear systems for monitoring staff training to ensure all staff are fully up to date with the training requirements of their role.

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

### **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the home, where appropriate, and are encouraged to participate in those activities. This specifically relates to ensuring that when children make requests for activities, the process for ensuring they are taken forward is not unnecessarily protracted. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's relevant plans. This specifically relates to the limited use of rewards in promoting positive behaviour. It also relates to having incentives that are obtainable. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. This specifically relates to the lack of clear oversight of staff training, what training staff need to complete, when it needs to be completed by and the frequency of any refresher training required. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

### **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:** 2 Barton Close, Grove Park, Enderby, Leicester LE19 1SJ

**Responsible individual:** Post vacant

**Registered manager:** Deborah Bassett

## Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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