

SC020576

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Ltd

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 young males between the ages of eight and 17. The home specialises in the care and treatment of children who have, or are considered likely to have, been a victim of sexual abuse or experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

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

Ofsted last visited this setting on 5 February 2020 to carry out a full inspection. The home was judged to be good, and the report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2020	Full	Good
07/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/05/2018	Full	Good
24/01/2018	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make very good progress in all key areas of their lives. This is because staff know them well and are encouraged to develop positive relationships. Furthermore, staff provide individualised and consistent support. Staff understand children's starting points and celebrate their progress and achievements. This means that children feel valued and respected.

Children benefit from the support they receive from an experienced and supportive staff team. For example, one child gave extremely positive feedback on the support he had received with his education, which helped him to pass his college course. He stated, 'I wouldn't have passed if the staff hadn't helped me.' Another child was able to demonstrate his singing and dancing skills to the inspector. This support helps children to grow in confidence and improves their self-esteem.

Staff support children to thrive and achieve in their education. One child has recently passed his college course and has enrolled on the next level. On arrival at the home, another child had no education placement in place. However, the registered manager worked with professionals and acted efficiently and effectively to secure a place in a local mainstream school. Staff supported the transition well and provided reassurance to the child. As a result, he is making good progress at school and has formed friendship groups.

Staff recognise the importance for children of seeing loved ones. They ensure that family time is promoted and they prioritise this. For example, one child had not been able to see his grandparents due to COVID-19 restrictions. Staff worked flexibly to overcome any difficulties and ensured that he was able to spend time with the people who are important to him. One professional commented, 'There is a real can-do attitude in the team,' and 'They pulled out all of the stops for (the child) to see his family.' This had a positive effect on the child's well-being.

Staff promote children's health needs well, and children receive weekly support from the home's therapist. Furthermore, staff work in partnership with the home's therapist to deliver focused and meaningful workshops to children. This approach helps children to learn about sensitive areas specific to them, in a safe and well-planned environment.

Children's views are central to the running of the home. Staff use creative and innovative ways to encourage children to contribute to their own plans. For example, staff have created one child's placement plan using a magazine format, which is personalised with his favourite Marvel characters. This creativity ensures that children feel valued and are able to take ownership of their lives.

Staff support and help children to prepare for independence. They promote and develop independent skills by working closely with children and the key people in

their lives. The registered manager skilfully balances the risks with opportunities for children to improve their skills. This means that children are better prepared when they move on from the home.

Overall, staff administer children's medication safely. The registered manager has produced specific plans and guides for staff to follow when managing children's medication. However, on the day of the inspection, the inspector identified a recording error where staff had failed to record the administration of one child's medication correctly.

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

Children feel safe in the home. Staff ensure that there are clear boundaries and expectations for children, which help to keep them safe. Staff also know the children well and understand their complex needs. As a result, there are rarely significant incidents with children, both inside and outside the home.

Children's risk assessments are specific and well recorded. They assess risk well and have clear strategies for staff to follow. Furthermore, children are encouraged to develop at a level which is individual to their own needs. The staff team ensures that restrictions and safeguarding strategies do not hinder development or independence. This allows children to develop their confidence and understanding of danger in a supportive environment.

Staff adopt a therapeutic and restorative approach to managing children's behaviour. This means that consequences and sanctions with children are rarely used. When staff have had to issue a consequence, they ensure that they discuss the issue with the key people involved in children's lives. As a result, children respect this approach and respond well. In contrast, the inspector identified shortfalls in the evaluation process, and the effectiveness of consequences is not always recorded on children's records.

Staff understand the risks that children face. In addition, the registered manager works proactively with the home's therapist and external professionals to ensure that children are able to develop their skills in a safe environment. For example, one child who was subject to strict supervision requirements has been encouraged to use a smart phone and to access free time in the community. This means that children are able to enhance their resilience and learn about risk.

The registered manager has reviewed the home's location risk assessment. It has been updated to reflect changes in guidance in relation to COVID-19. Furthermore, the assessment of risk from the local area, including child exploitation concerns, are recorded well. In contrast, the more immediate risks posed by neighbouring homes have not been recorded, and the views of key professionals have not been considered when completing the assessment. Therefore, the assessment of local risks to children has not been fully explored.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is very experienced and suitably qualified and leads the home effectively. She is ambitious and advocates well for children in the home. She places children at the heart of what she does and promotes their safety and well-being. The registered manager has high expectations and ensures that children are supported to make progress in all areas of their lives. She is supported by an ambitious deputy manager who is keen to learn and develop. This ensures that children receive good-quality care.

Staff feel well supported and described the management team as approachable. Staff receive regular and reflective supervision sessions. Consequently, the registered manager has created a homely culture where children enjoy living and staff enjoy coming to work.

Staff receive regular training, and this is relevant to the needs of the children. In addition, training helps to develop and enhance the care delivered to children. For example, staff provided feedback on training on the prevention of criminal exploitation, which they had completed with external partners. They further described how it helped them to understand what to do when identifying concerns. This improves staff confidence and the quality of their work.

Management oversight and monitoring processes are creative and reflective. As a result, the registered manager knows the home's strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, she takes action to address any shortfalls and identifies areas for improvement. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the service and is clear about the support offered to children.

The majority of staff in the home are qualified. One member of staff is currently in the process of completing the required level 3 diploma. However, this has not been achieved in the required timescales, and the COVID-19 restrictions have affected the progress. The registered manager has identified this shortfall and taken action to ensure that the staff member is supported to complete this.

External professionals commented positively on the home. One professional stated, 'I think the home [has] been brilliant. Children are at the centre of everything they do in the home,' and 'They go above and beyond' in the care provided.

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 prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(vii)) This specifically relates to behaviour management records and evaluating the effectiveness of consequences given to children in the home.	29 July 2021
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12 (2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult and take into account the views of each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) This specifically relates to the home's location risk assessment and the need for the registered manager to review, update and include all risks to children based on the environment and the home's location. It also requires the registered manager to consult and take into consideration	29 July 2021

the views of key partner agencies when conducting the review.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). The registered person may extend the time period if the member of staff hasn't worked in the role for a prolonged period, such as sick leave or maternity leave, or if it is not reasonable to expect the member of staff to complete in this timescale due to the nature of the hours they work. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Sophie Nicholls

Registered manager: Deborah Bassett

Inspector

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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