

SC020630

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home. All children were spoken to during the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2022. She is working towards the level 5 diploma in leadership and management in residential care.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 June 2024

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	outstanding
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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: 17 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/07/2023	Full	Good
22/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are welcomed into the home, which helps them to settle. Children's moves are well coordinated and are centred around the child. In addition, the views of children already living in the home are considered, which supports decision-making. One child has moved on from the home since the last inspection, as staff were unable to meet their changing health needs.

The atmosphere in the home is warm and friendly. Children are proud of their comfortable, well-maintained, spacious home. Children enjoy preparing home-cooked meals for each other. They like caring for their two pet cats and helping to look after the manager's dog.

Children and staff share positive relationships. This reinforces to the children that they have adults in their life who care about them. This is helping children to develop a positive view of themselves and grow in confidence.

Children's hobbies and interests are encouraged. They say they have lots of fun with the staff and they have opportunities to experience new things. One child enjoys going to theme parks, swimming and mountain biking. Another child enjoys spending time with their horse. Supporting children's interests builds relationships and increases children's self-esteem and sense of self-worth.

Children's education is promoted. One child has returned to school after an 18-month absence. Staff supported the child to purchase a new uniform in preparation for their return. The other children are completing their GCSE exams.

Children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles, for example, going to the gym. Staff understand and meet children's health needs well. This helps to maintain children's physical and emotional well-being.

Staff support children to spend time with people who are important to them. This promotes and maintains positive relationships.

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

Children say they feel extremely safe at the home and they trust the staff. One child said, 'My bedroom is my safe place. Staff have created a sanctuary for me. I have never felt so safe, settled and wanted in my life. Living here is like being in heaven.'

Staff exceed their responsibilities to protect children. They know children well and demonstrate an exceptional understanding of their life experiences and vulnerabilities. They work tirelessly in partnership with professionals and specialist services to ensure that children are safe. They show great persistence, curiosity and determination when

they are faced with complex situations. This determination has resulted in one child thriving because their use of illegal substances has ceased. The child said, 'The staff have saved me. I am the best version of myself because of them.'

The nurturing and caring approach shown by staff when children are at risk of self-harm is exemplary and contributes to the progress children are making. Staff are highly skilled and work with children at their own pace to help them explore and reframe their thoughts and feelings. This builds trust and gives children the reassurance and guidance that they need in their most vulnerable times. As a result, children are safer, and there have been no incidents of self-harm for six months. One child said, 'Staff have not given up on me. I will never forget their help.'

Children participate in creating their detailed risk assessments and plans. This means their plans are helpful to them. The information is reviewed frequently to ensure that staff have the information they need to provide safe and consistent care.

Children benefit from high-quality direct-work sessions with staff that help them to understand risks and manage their feelings and emotions. In addition, the effective and consistent use of boundaries further supports children to self-regulate their behaviours.

Staff de-escalate incidents quickly and respond to conflicts between children appropriately. Following disagreements, children are supported to repair their relationships, which maintains a calm and stable atmosphere at the home.

The use of physical restraint has reduced since the last inspection. When used, it is proportionate and necessary. The manager talks with children and staff about their experiences and scrutinises incidents to ensure that interventions were necessary and proportionate to maintain children's safety. Any learning is shared and used to improve practice.

Children rarely go missing from the home. Detailed, individualised missing-from-home protocols are in place and staff fully understand the procedures to follow should a child go missing.

Complaints children make are taken seriously and they are responded to well. This contributes to children's feeling of safety and shows children are listened to.

Recruitment practice is robust. Children have created questions that managers ask during the interviews of potential staff. This means children participate in decisions about who looks after them. Staff are vetted before looking after children. This ensures that children receive care from safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The dedicated manager has high aspirations for children. She is proud of the children and their achievements. An enthusiastic deputy manager and an experienced responsible

individual support her. The responsible individual visits the home frequently and knows the children and staff well.

The manager has good oversight of the home, children's care and the progress they are making. Monitoring systems help the manager to evaluate the home's strengths and areas for development. Her influence and approach create a nurturing and happy environment in which children feel safe and flourish.

Staff feel supported by their managers. New staff receive a comprehensive induction and they complete a training programme to give them the skills to support children well. The manager values her staff team. This means morale is high and staff share the manager's commitment to wanting the best outcomes for children.

The manager confidently challenges partner agencies to ensure that children's voices are heard when they are not getting the support that they need. This shows the manager's dedication to the children. Social workers say that the manager and staff collaborate well with them and communication is good.

Staff do not always receive supervision in line with the provider's expectations, which means opportunities for them to reflect on their practice are missed. In addition, staff who have worked at the home for over 12 months have not had their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised as required. Not all staff are suitably qualified to work with children. Currently, one staff member is out of timescale for completing a relevant level 3 qualification. Action is being taken to address this.

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, The 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
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to staff completing relevant qualifications within specified timescales.	30 August 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development;	31 July 2024

receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and

have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))

This specifically relates to staff receiving supervision in line with the provider's expectations and staff having their performance appraised annually.

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: SC020630

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: Laura Rider

Registered manager: Marie Manton

Inspector

Amy Richards, Social Care Inspector

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