

SC023636

Registered provider: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to 10 children. The statement of purpose says that the home is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment along with family support to psychologically traumatised children.

There has been no registered manager in post since 14 February 2022.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 09 and 10 March 2022

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: 20 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
28/06/2017	Full	Outstanding
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy living in this home and make good progress. They are cared for by staff who have the knowledge and skills to provide children with positive experiences. As a result, children flourish and have fun in this home.

Children are cared for by highly devoted adults. Staff use their expertise and knowledge, gained from the Integrated Systematic Therapy model of parenting, to provide children with a nurturing and healing approach to care. This helps children deal with feelings of rejection caused by being away from family and friends. One child said, 'I really like it here because I get therapy, and it has helped me so much.'

Adults have positive and respectful relationships with parents and professionals. This enables children to feel assured in building secure relationships with staff. One grandparent said, 'They are always professional, honest and are very kind. They understand what we have been through as family and support us just as much as they support our granddaughter.'

The manager and adults work closely with professionals and parents to ensure that the needs of children are fully understood before they move into the home. Thorough child-centred plans are completed and shared with children, professionals and parents, ensuring that everyone is aware of all the stages involved during the move. Guidance is obtained from the therapy team to ensure that skilled care is provided to children from the onset. Consequently, children are placed with peers with whom they get on well.

Children make good progress in their education. Those who previously struggled to attend and engage in education now excel in their attendance and attainment. The manager and adults work closely with teaching staff at the school to ensure that informed support is given to children. Children enjoy their time at school and understand the importance of education for their future.

Children have several ways to present their views, and they contribute to changes in the home. Key adults work closely with individual children, providing protected space to help them share their wishes, anxieties and feelings openly and honestly. As a result, children know they are listened to and recognise the efforts made to meet their care needs. One child said, 'If I am not happy or do not feel safe, I will tell my key worker, as she listens to me.'

Children enjoy attending a wide range of clubs and activities in the community and at home. These include gymnastics, singing, dancing, scouts, walks by the beach and fun playing with their dolls and other toys in the home. Children celebrate different occasions. For example, everyone in the home joined in to celebrate a child's birthday party on the day of the inspection. The child said, 'I loved my cake and I got so many presents I liked. It was so much fun.'

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

Adults prioritise the safety of children. Extensive reflective discussions are held by senior leaders and adults when safeguarding issues occur. This provides space for the team to reflect on incidents and consider how practice could be improved. This approach reduces the recurrence of incidents and helps children to make safer choices.

When children go missing from the home, managers and adults ensure that protocols and procedures are followed. Adults swiftly complete searches and work alongside local police to locate and bring children back home safely.

The home is well maintained, but some areas require further attention. Adults have not set up clear routines with children to ensure that their bedrooms are kept clean. Some children's bedrooms were in a poor state. One bedroom had a potential hazard, featuring a portable radio which was plugged with the electric cable running across the room. A child did not have an absorbing mat, resulting in rashes requiring medical treatment. These shortcomings detract from a predominantly homely and caring environment for children.

Adults have worked hard to reduce the use of physical intervention. This has been achieved by adults using de-escalation techniques and supporting children to learn self-regulation strategies. Team reflective discussions help adults reflect on how to further reduce physical interventions with children. Management oversight of physical interventions is not always completed promptly following incidents. This potentially causes a delay in applying any practice-related learning.

Leaders and managers carefully recruit adults that are suitable to safely work with children. Children are sometimes involved in the recruitment processes through candidates being invited to meet children in their home. Even though this process captures the children's voices, it is not thoroughly assessed to make it clear how potential recruits visiting the home are suitably checked and monitored.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new manager has been recently appointed to the home and is applying for registration with Ofsted. She is providing good leadership to adults and is taking a leading role in promoting the home's model of practice in the care given to children. An adult told the inspector, 'The new director is very open, understanding, objective and unbiased in her response, and helps staff understand different ways on how to deliver practice.'

The manager uses effective processes to monitor the progress made by children. Children's achievements are identified using several measures. An important factor is their response to therapy. Therapeutically informed decisions are made regarding how best children can positively move on from the home to permanent placements. This approach helps to break cycles of placement breakdowns and supports children's moves to well-matched placements.

The manager and adults receive regular and effective supervision. This is strengthened by regular team meetings and therapy sessions to promote good practice and support adults with their emotional well-being.

Adults are well supported in their professional development, and this improves their skills and knowledge. New staff complete mandatory training and an induction programme. Experienced adults complete continuing, more advanced training. Children are well supported by skilled and knowledgeable adults.

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— 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— details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	16 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. The children's home should offer a homely, domestic environment. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene, etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than an 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that good employment practice is maintained, as set out in regulations 31 to 33. They must ensure that arrangements for potential new recruits who visit the home as part of the recruitment process are assessed to minimise potential risks to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: SC023636

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy

Registered provider address: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy, 210
Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX

Responsible individual: Gary Yexley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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