

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 the home is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment, along with family support, to psychologically traumatised children.

There is no registered manager at this home. The post has been vacant since 28 February 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 28 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/06/2017	Full	Outstanding
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
29/12/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i)) Specifically, ensure children's individual risk assessments contain strategies for minimising all known risks and that an assessment is undertaken, prior to admission, of the likely impact of a child moving into the home.	24/12/2018

Recommendations

- As set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- Specifically, obtain the full employment history of potential new members of staff.
- Regulation 40(4) requires the registered person to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)–(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)
- Specifically, ensure the designated person in the local authority is informed of any allegations made against a member of staff, in a timely manner.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The staff have the knowledge and skills to develop highly therapeutic, nurturing relationships with the children in their care. They adapt their practice to the specific needs of the child and this ensures that the care being provided is individualised and sensitive to the negative experiences children may have experienced before moving to the home.

Children's physical health and emotional well-being are prioritised. Staff receive relevant training to support children with specific medical conditions and they liaise effectively with medical professionals. Staff fully implement the home's therapeutic model of care and children engage positively with their individual therapists. As a result, children feel valued and understand the concept of 'being held in mind' by their key workers.

Staff encourage and support the children to develop a positive attitude towards their education. Well-developed induction plans help children who are new to the home settle into the organisation's school quickly. Many children feel inspired to learn and develop a range of new interests. This is a significant achievement for the children who have previously struggled to engage effectively with their educational provisions.

The staff are aspirational for the children and are committed to ensuring they have the best possible outcomes. Consequently, when children are struggling with the boundaries and expectations that are placed upon them in the home, staff find creative ways to help them manage their anxieties and engage positively with the home's routines. This approach reduces the potential for a child's placement to break down.

Over time, children grow in confidence and improve their self-esteem. Their levels of anxiety reduce and they make significant progress across all aspects of their lives. In the majority of cases, the aims of the placement are met and children are well prepared to move on to more permanent care arrangements.

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

The staff have a thorough understanding of each child's vulnerabilities and how these could place the child at risk of harm. This knowledge and understanding is not always conveyed in the child's risk assessment. The strategies in risk assessments for minimising the potential for children to harm themselves, become sexually exploited or engage in sexually harmful behaviours are not always detailed or specific. However, in practice, the vigilance of the staff ensures that children are unlikely to come to harm.

Children said that they feel safe in the home and they expressed confidence in the ability of staff to address any issues that are causing them concern. The trusting relationships that staff build with children are a strong protective factor, because children feel comfortable discussing issues relating to their safety and well-being. Staff respond

quickly and effectively to any information which might indicate a child is at risk of harm.

Children's behaviour management plans are highly effective tools for promoting positive behaviour. They specify the triggers which may cause a child to become distressed and provide staff with clear guidance on how to de-escalate confrontational situations. A restorative approach is taken to resolving conflict among the children and there is a strong ethos of children and adults showing respect for one another.

The use of physical restraint is closely monitored. Managers have an effective system for reflecting on incidents where restraint has been used, so that practice can be amended according to the needs of the child. Careful and sensitive planning gives information on how each child should be held if the need arises.

Staff have a clear understanding of the action they should take when child protection concerns arise. This includes reporting procedures. Generally, practice relating to the protection of children is of a high standard, although in one case there was a delay in consulting the designated officer in the local authority when a child made an allegation against a member of staff. This shortfall was identified through the home's quality of care monitoring system and remedial action was taken.

Staff recruitment strategies are in place to minimise the potential for unsuitable adults to become employed at the home. These would be strengthened by exploring the full employment history of applicants before they become employed by the organisation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager left the home on 28 February 2018. Since then, the home has been managed by the assistant manager, who is highly experienced and holds the organisation's accredited diploma in psychosocial care. The assistant manager has made an application to become registered with Ofsted, but administrative processes beyond the provider's control have led to a delay in this being progressed. The transition and subsequent management of the home have been highly effective.

Leaders and managers have effective oversight of the care planning process. The standard of care planning is exceptionally high. Children's needs assessments undertaken at the home are detailed and clearly specify how children will be supported and cared for. The intended outcomes of the child's placement at the home are defined at the point of admission and close monitoring of the child's progress ensures that care planning is up to date and relevant to the specific needs of the child.

Effective monitoring systems ensure that the quality of care being provided is maintained to a high standard. All significant events are reviewed by the manager and these are viewed as an opportunity to learn and develop practice. Staff are well trained in the organisation's therapeutic model of care and this is implemented in practice, ensuring consistency of care for the children.

There are excellent support systems in place for the staff team. These enable the staff to reflect on their practice and understand the personal impact of working with highly vulnerable children. Consequently, the staff feel valued and are motivated to provide high standards of care. Staff turnover is relatively low and this ensures minimal disruption to the children's sense of security and consistency.

Leaders and managers develop and maintain positive working relationships with other professionals, and are focused on ensuring that all those working with the children are meeting their responsibilities. Social workers spoken to during this inspection said that they are kept informed of any issues relating to the child they have placed at the home, and feel fully engaged in the care planning process.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 210 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX

Responsible individual: Stephen Blunden

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Stephen Collett: social care inspector

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