

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 provide care for up to 10 children who may have social and emotional difficulties. The home forms part of a residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment. There were 10 children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Children refer to staff caring for them as adults and so they are referred to as such throughout this report.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 7 September 2022.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 October 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	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: 13 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2024	Full	Good
22/11/2022	Full	Good
14/03/2022	Full	Good
20/02/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is well maintained and has ample space, both indoors and outdoors, for children to enjoy and play. There are a range of toys, books, games and play equipment readily available which meet the individual needs and interests of the children living at the home. Children attend school regularly and adults have close working relationships with the school staff team. This means they can monitor progress and achievements closely. The adults encourage children to access a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. This further supports them to build their skills in social experiences.

The children are helped to stay healthy. The adults ensure that the children are registered with universal health professionals and that routine appointments and check-ups are maintained. The dedicated therapist in the home supports the adults to help the children with their experiences of loss and trauma.

The dedicated adults who support children's family time build positive relationships with family members and those important to the children. This helps children and their families maintain these crucial relationships.

There are two house rabbits which the children take turns to provide care to. One child has their own gerbils. This care of animals supports the children to develop some independence skills, promoting increasing levels of responsibility and confidence.

There has been a period of stability since the previous inspection, which evidences that children are settled in the home. Photos of the children and their artworks are displayed around the home. This supports their sense of belonging and self-worth. Children have personalised plaques for their bedroom doors and wooden placemats for the dinner table. These become keepsakes for the children when they are ready to move on. Bedrooms are themed to the children's likes. Their achievements, such as trophies and certificates, which they are proud of, are displayed.

Children feel seen and heard by the adults who care for them. They are offered a variety of ways to have their voices and views heard. These are varied to be accessible to all children. The adults are responsive to the children's needs. Interactions and relationships between the adults and children are warm and nurturing. The children are excited when they see their favourite adults and run up to them for a cuddle. One child said that apart from their key worker, they couldn't pick a favourite adult as all the adults who care for them are 'nice'.

Professional feedback consistently demonstrated that children are making good progress from their starting points due to the help and support of the adults. One child, who had made significant progress in understanding and managing their emotions, keeping safe and their education, was described as 'unrecognisable' by their placing authority.

Inclusive practice is threaded through the home and children feel able to express themselves and their personal identity without judgement.

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

Children are provided with clear and consistent expectations and boundaries by the adults. This consistent approach helps children to feel safe. Children are helped to learn the importance of being respectful of their and others' private spaces.

Adults know how to report any safeguarding concerns. They are aware how the location and structure of the organisation increases the potential risks of a closed culture and know how to report any concerns and to whom they should be reported. Any significant events are reported and shared with appropriate authorities. The manager and other adults ensure that any necessary action is taken quickly to keep children safe. This includes reporting concerns, as appropriate, to the local area designated officer, who said that the manager 'provided a prompt and thorough investigation following an allegation.'

Adults ensure the children are safeguarded effectively. Some children have made great progress in keeping safe since moving in. For example, one child was previously regularly missing for extended periods of time and over a wide area. However, since moving in, they have not gone missing from home. Although the children are not currently at risk of exploitation and do not go missing, adults need to remain mindful of risks that may present and be prepared to respond quickly to these. The home is on a dark country lane, with no pavements, along which vehicles travel fast. Should a child leave the home without adult support they would be immediately at risk. However, adults were not aware of any quickly accessible safety equipment, such as torches or high-visibility vests.

The adults are appropriately trained to manage difficult situations. Physical interventions are used as a last resort. The use of physical interventions is monitored and reviewed regularly by the in-house physical intervention trainer. However, some recordings lack sufficient detail to understand effectively the events and support given to children. Some incidents in the home are not clearly recorded. Furthermore, the children's risk assessments are not always clear in directing adults' responses to known presenting risks.

Health and safety aspects of the home are routinely monitored and maintained in line with expectations. However, there is a lack of clear risk assessment regarding the significant external building work taking place, specifically relating to children accessing erected scaffolding.

Adults receive additional training when there are specific identified health needs. One child is prescribed emergency medication in response to seizures. Adults carry the medication with the child at all times. This medication has not needed to be given. However, the guidance for adults on how this is to be administered is not clear. Changes to the amount prescribed are not clearly recorded and there are inconsistencies recorded

in dosages to be given. As a result, adults are not given clear guidance on how to give this medication should it be required.

Safer recruitment principles are generally well followed. However, one adult recruitment file viewed did not identify gaps in employment history. The manager therefore did not explore these. The manager does not currently have full oversight of recruitment processes, including access to full details of suitability checks. These are missed opportunities to ensure robust safer recruitment processes are consistently in place.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager and other senior leaders work closely together. The adults are complimentary about the support available to them from the suitably qualified senior management team. They value the individual supervision and reflective spaces, which they feel enhances their practice.

There is a full complement of permanent adults who work well in their allocated teams. Agency workers are used rarely, and when they are required, the same individual is used to provide some consistency to the children.

Partner professionals are complimentary of the service and report effective collaborative working with all the adults.

Adults are supported by a structured induction plan and varied training package which meets the needs of the children living in the home. The manager has a clear action plan and timescales in place to ensure adults complete the required level 3 qualification.

The organisation is currently moving from paper-based to online recording systems. The two systems are currently running simultaneously. As a result, records management is currently a challenge. Some important information is difficult to locate or is missing. There are gaps in children's records and local authority care plans are either not available or up to date. The manager has not ensured a clear and regular escalation process to gain copies of important documents from children's local authorities.

The reports submitted by the independent person lack detail and analysis. This shortfall has not been challenged by the manager or responsible individual. Consequently, opportunities to develop a greater depth and breadth of the experiences of children and the quality of care offered are potentially missed.

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
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; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b))	15 November 2024
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	15 November 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to: respond to the health needs of children; administer basic first aid and minor illness treatment; help children to manage long-term conditions and where necessary meet specific individual health needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice as set out in regulations 31–33. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 210 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX

Responsible individual: Gary Yexley

Registered manager: Olivia Parvin

Inspectors

Cassie Martin, Social Care Inspector (Lead)
Joanna Heller, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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