

SC028460

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care and accommodation for up to four children. The home's statement of purpose states that the home provides care to children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2002.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 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: 4 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/05/2021	Full	Good
08/04/2019	Full	Good
09/04/2018	Full	Good
15/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have good experiences and make steady progress from their starting points. They share mutually trusting relationships with staff. A child said, 'Staff came to see me when I was in hospital. It was great, they gave me a big hug.' The home's continuing focus on providing care to children that is more therapeutic in approach has a positive impact on the progress and experiences of children. Staff know individual children well and work diligently to meet their needs.

Children are treated with respect and dignity. Staff meet children's identity needs well. This is particularly the case for issues around gender and sexual identity. Children have good opportunities to share their wishes and feelings about the home and how it is run. Staff encourage them to make day-to-day choices. Children's meetings and key-work sessions ensure that children contribute to shaping how the home is run.

Children are aware of how to make complaints, but do not do so, preferring to speak directly with staff instead.

Children are supported to live healthy lifestyles. Staff register children with primary care services and encourage them to keep medical appointments and follow treatment plans. Children have access to specialist healthcare professionals as required. Staff's management of medication is safe and appropriate.

Children receive excellent support that promotes their positive mental health. The home provides a number of innovative therapeutic services that help to encourage children's emotional well-being. These include weekly sessions with the organisation's counsellor, regular assisted therapeutic dog therapy and direct work with an art therapist. This approach to care is largely effective. Children's emotional well-being shows improvement the longer they remain in the home.

Staff are effective in minimising the risk of COVID-19 within the home. Children benefit from clear guidance and preventative measures in place which help to keep children, staff and others free from infection.

Staff ensure that appropriate educational resources are in place to support children's learning. When children are not attending school, staff devise bespoke learning opportunities for them. For example, staff encourage children to use educational workbooks. This ensures that children continue to learn while they are awaiting enrolment in formal education. Children benefit from staff's consistent and effective communication with education professionals.

Older children are prepared well for adulthood. The home's independence programme helps children to develop essential daily living skills. This includes tasks such as laundry, shopping and meal preparation. Staff encourage and support

children to apply for jobs and apprenticeships when this is what they wish to do.

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

Children say that they feel safe. Their safety and well-being are at the centre of practice at the home. Staff's therapeutic approach to care has a positive impact on reducing risks. This is particularly the case in staff's management of self-harm incidents. Staff have a clear understanding of the organisation's child protection policies and procedures. This helps to keep children safe.

Risk assessments identify known and anticipated risks to children. Staff keep these under review and up to date. Assessments include strategies that help to reduce risks. Staff receive bespoke training in key safeguarding issues, for example, drug and alcohol misuse, self-harm incidents and gang affiliation. Children are also encouraged to undertake training in issues such as healthy relationships and child sexual exploitation. This is effective in reducing some children's risk-taking behaviour.

Staff promote positive behaviour and children largely adhere to the house rules. Staff's supervision of children is good, and they manage children's behaviour well. This promotes the protection of children. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of critical incidents, which staff have managed well. Staff do not restrain children.

Staff conduct bedroom searches if they believe there are objects that may pose a risk to children. Room searches are conducted appropriately and in line with the home's policies. As required, staff observe children in their rooms at regular intervals. This ensures that they are safe and not causing harm to themselves.

Children benefit from clear boundaries set by staff which help to keep children safe. Staff are familiar with missing person protocols and they take effective action if children are missing or are away from the home without permission. Staff's communication with the police is consistent. This ensures that there is a coordinated effort to encourage the safe return of children.

Staff work effectively with other safeguarding professionals to ensure that children are kept safe. Staff's communication with partners is frequent and they highlight placements issues as soon as they arise. Managers participate in regular professional network meetings that explore safeguarding concerns and how to best to resolve these. This helps to keep children safe from harm.

Staff recruitment and vetting practices are appropriate and safe. Staff personnel files contain comprehensive information about staff wanting to work at the home. This ensures that potential new staff have the necessary skills and training to work with children.

The home's premises are comfortable and meet children's accommodation needs. Staff conduct regular health and safety checks to confirm that the building is safe.

Communal areas are decorated with positive affirmations, children's artwork and photos of celebrations and social events. Children are comfortable in their surroundings and enjoy personalising their bedrooms.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership and management of the home are strong. The registered manager has managed the home for several years and is supported by a deputy manager and senior staff. Managers have high ambitions for the home's development and high aspirations for what children can achieve.

The home's monitoring and review systems are good. Managers undertake regular monitoring exercises. These explore most aspects of the running of the home and offer some insight into the quality of the service. Managers are able to chart effectively the progress children are making. However, monthly monitoring reports as required by the regulations are not consistently forwarded to Ofsted, and do not always contain feedback from stakeholders. Furthermore, safeguarding notifications to Ofsted do not always contain clear and concise information.

Case records are organised and outline well the work being completed with children, their progress and any placement issues. Staff encourage children to review information written about them, as one child was seen to do during the inspection.

The staff team works effectively and sensitively with children. Staffing ratios are appropriate to meet the individual needs of each child. When staff identify high risk, additional support staff are promptly made available. This ensures that children are kept safe.

Managers provide good support to the staff team. Staff receive regular, meaningful supervision and annual appraisals. A member of staff said, 'I have to say, I'm very much supported by managers. Supervision is just what I need. It leaves me feeling very different. It's refreshing.' The support of managers leads to the effective development of staff.

Staff training opportunities are very good and cover a range of issues. This allows staff to provide children with safe care that meets their specific needs. Staff training is moving towards being held face to face. This had not been the case in recent months due to COVID-19 restrictions. Staff training workshops are bespoke and tailored to address emerging issues for children. This helps to improve staff's understanding and management of relevant care issues as they arise.

Leaders and managers prioritise the needs of children. The home's care planning process is effective. Children's outcomes improve from their starting points and their experiences are positive.

The home is meeting the aims and objectives as stated in its statement of purpose. Managers and staff share good working relationships with other professionals and

parents. This ensures that all parties are aware of placement issues and developments.

A local authority social worker said, 'The staff team are brilliant. My young person speaks very highly of them; they would be torn apart if the placement came to an end. Communication is good, staff consult before they take action, and their reports are written within minutes of incidents happening. Safeguarding plans are live documents that are constantly reviewed. There's a sense of stability.'

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 complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	1 July 2022

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	1 May 2022
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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: SC028460

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual: Monica Thompson

Registered manager: Valerie Campbell

Inspector

Sandra Jacobs-Walls, Social Care Inspector

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