

SC032838

Registered provider: Appletree Treatment Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. The home is registered to care for up to eight children, aged between six and 12 years, who have suffered early childhood trauma and are likely to experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2014.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 July 2023

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: 8 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2022	Full	Good
03/08/2021	Full	Outstanding
12/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
30/05/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, seven children were living in the home. All children spoke with inspectors and said they were happy living in the home. Since the last inspection, two children have left the home, in positive moves for them. One child wrote they felt it was 'home from home' and that they would miss not living there.

Children are at the centre of this home. They receive age-appropriate hugs and cuddles which provides them with lots of reassurance. They benefit from care from a stable and consistent staff team. Children are supported to build trusting relationships with staff, who care about them. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging, which underpins the progress they make.

All children receive weekly therapy, which supports their emotional well-being. The therapeutic model used in the home supports staff to understand and respond to trauma-based behaviours. Formulation plans completed by therapists support children's ongoing care planning.

Children attend the company's independent school on the same site as this home. Good routines support children to have excellent attendance. The home has positive relationships with teaching staff and wraparound care is provided. One teacher told inspectors, 'It feels that this is the best working relationship the school and home have had.'

Staff support children to lead healthier lives and improve their overall physical well-being, by providing healthy foods and encouraging exercise through a variety of activities. Children are involved in the local community, including learning about social responsibility through fundraising by going on fun walks and collecting bottle tops.

Children are encouraged to develop their creativity and imagination by growing vegetables, having a fairy garden and having toadstools to sit on when toasting marshmallows. Children's memories and experiences at the home are captured well in videos and memory books. Children were proud to show inspectors their memory books.

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

Safeguarding is highly effective. Risk assessments clearly identify risks and vulnerabilities and what actions should be taken to reduce risks. Risk management is supported by individual behaviour management documents. Staff understand these and use them effectively.

Staff give children clear and consistent boundaries that contribute to children feeling safe. Inspectors observed warm and nurturing relationships between staff and

children. This supports children to share any worries or concerns they have. Some children have a blackboard in their bedroom as they prefer to share their feelings or worries by writing them down.

Staff use their positive relationships with children to de-escalate situations. This means that physical interventions are only used as a last resort to keep children safe. When physical interventions are used, staff complete a detailed report which includes evaluation and lessons learned.

Staff receive training to build their skills and knowledge, particularly around safeguarding so they can keep children safe. All staff need to be brought up to date with epilepsy training to ensure that they have the knowledge to meet children's needs.

The physical environment of the home is safe and secure and protects children from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by a committed and dedicated manager. Her practice is embedded in a child-centred ethos and she and her team are committed to providing high-quality care to children.

The home is fully staffed and has a stable staff team. The manager and some of the staff have worked in the home for many years. This means that children receive reliable, consistent and stable care. Staff morale is high. Children benefit from this positive environment.

The internal monitoring of the home could be improved in some areas. Some documents contain incorrect information. For example, a child's risk assessment recorded that the child had made an allegation against a member of staff, which was not accurate. Verification of a reference had incorrect dates. A document showed that a child had an education, health and safety plan, which was incorrect. A requirement has been made to address these shortfalls.

Staff are benefiting from regular supervision. Records of supervision are of good quality and comprehensive. As well as focusing on staff's ongoing development, they centre on supporting staff's well-being.

Managers advocate well for children. They build effective relationships with birth family members and external professionals. One parent said, 'They keep me updated about everything and they send videos and photos so I can see my child grow and develop.'

The home is achieving the aims and objectives set out in its statement of purpose. However, the registered manager should ensure that the statement of purpose is updated after any changes to the service or staffing and is sent to the regulator.

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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) Specifically, ensure accurate information in documents.	1 September 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they develop and keep under review a statement of purpose. The statement of purpose should be updated after any changes to the service or staffing and sent to the regulator. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to meet children's needs. In particular, ensure that the staff receive training to support children who have epilepsy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)

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: SC032838

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Appletree Treatment Centre Limited

Registered provider address: Meathop Park, Meathop, Grange-over-Sands,
Cumbria LA11 6RF

Responsible individual: Rowan Knapton

Registered manager: Amanda Fishwick

Inspectors

Nicola Clements, Social Care Inspector
Helen Fee, Social Care Inspector

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