

# SC039087

Registered provider: Care Afloat Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and can accommodate one child who may be experiencing a period of difficulty or be in crisis.

Accommodation is provided on a narrowboat that travels the canal network.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2017.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 November 2024

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
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|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |                                 |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 19 December 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 19/12/2023      | Full            | Good                 |
| 19/07/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 09/03/2020      | Full            | Good                 |
| 08/01/2019      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The child is making positive progress from their starting point. They have trusting and secure relationships with staff who know them well and support them with warmth and empathy. Staff treat the child with dignity and respect and speak fondly and positively about them.

Staff ensure that the child has opportunities to share their views and wishes through key-work sessions and daily discussions. They also ensure that the child has an independent advocate and access to an organisation's feedback app on their mobile phone, which they can use if they don't wish to share any issues directly with staff.

There are significant challenges with the child's attendance and engagement with school, and this has declined since the last inspection. The manager and staff attend meetings with the school and encourage the child to engage in education. However, the manager and staff need to challenge and explore this further with the placing authority and virtual school to ensure that there is access to suitable education provision that meet the child's needs.

Staff support the child's time with family in line with agreed plans. Staff have developed positive relationships with family members. They work together to make sure that time with family is supported and encouraged. This ensures that the child can maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

Staff support the child to take part in activities they enjoy. Staff offer and encourage the child to try new activities, such as joining a football team, and spend time with friends, which supports them to build age-appropriate friendships. However, staff also respect that the child enjoys spending the majority of their time fishing. Staff have taken the child on several fishing holidays.

Staff ensure that the child's health needs are met. The child is supported to attend routine health appointments and seek specialist health input when needed. When they refuse to attend health appointments, staff discuss the importance of the appointment with them so that they are able to make an informed choice about whether they attend.

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

When the child has raised any concerns about staff, they have been listened to, and appropriate action has been taken by leaders and managers in response. Staff have supported the child to express their concerns, and they have prioritised the child's welfare.

The child rarely goes missing from home. When they have been away from the home without permission or have not returned at the agreed time, staff have taken suitable

action to locate and return them as quickly as possible. When the child returns, staff talk to them to discuss why they have been missing from home and understand the underlying reasons for this.

Staff regularly review and update the child's support plans and risk assessments. They are detailed documents that reflect the child's lived experiences and provide clear guidance and strategies for staff to follow. This ensures that the child receives consistent support and care. However, plans are very detailed and hold lots of historical information.

Staff understand the child's experiences; they respond with appropriate boundaries about what is safe and acceptable behaviour and seek to understand the triggers for behaviour. Staff have positive relationships with the child, and this, alongside the use of behaviour support strategies, helps the child to be settled. There have been no occasions when physical intervention has been necessary.

Direct-work sessions with the child take place frequently; some sessions are planned, and some are held following a significant event. Staff take opportunities to provide sessions that are relevant to what is going on in the child's life and to help prepare them for upcoming events, such as care plan reviews and health appointments.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The registered manager is experienced and is supported by a deputy manager and an experienced staff team. During the inspection, the registered manager and the responsible individual were not available; this meant that some management information was not accessible.

The manager makes use of internal and external monitoring systems. However, the quality of care review does not include the feedback and opinions of the child or key people in the child's life. In addition to this, actions detailed in the plan are not specific to the needs of the child or the home. As a result, they do not contribute to improving or maintaining the quality of care provided.

The manager does not always have oversight of reports of significant events, such as missing-from-home episodes and incidents. This impacts the manager's ability to review and evaluate protocols and to identify what has worked well or lessons learned.

There is a stable and consistent workforce who know the child well. Staff are supported to take part in supervision sessions; however, these are not always regular and are not practice related. This is a missed opportunity to review staff practice, to support staff to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same.

Team meetings are well attended, and staff understand the value of these meetings. They are an opportunity for the team to meet and share information, review support strategies for the child and use the knowledge of the therapy team.

Staff are trained in most subjects to meet the child's individual needs. However, staff are not trained in oppositional defiant disorder, and not all staff have completed training in substance misuse and internet safety.

## 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         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.<br/>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff have completed safeguarding training and training to meet the child's individual needs.</p> | 20 December 2024 |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p>                                                                  | 20 December 2024 |

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| <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement;</p> <p>raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;</p> <p>help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and</p> <p>that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning.<br/>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(x)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered provider must ensure that the education provision offered to the child meets their needs.</p> |                         |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>20 December 2024</p> |

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| <p>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))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered must ensure that they have oversight of significant events and reports and use reflection to identify shortfalls or areas of positive practice.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                  |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that supervision sessions take place regularly and are practice related.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 20 December 2024 |
| <p>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.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>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) (5))</p> | 20 December 2024 |



Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the quality of care review includes feedback and opinions of children and stakeholders.

In addition to this, the registered person must ensure that actions to improve the quality of care are specific to the needs of the children and the home.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Specifically, the registered person should ensure that risk assessments and support plans are clear, directive and do not become a chronology of events. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered provider should ensure that if records are kept electronically, that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

## 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:** SC039087

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Care Afloat Limited

**Registered provider address:** 158-160 Birkrig, Digmoor Parade, Skelmersdale WN8 9HP

**Responsible individual:** Michael Fletcher

**Registered manager:** Claire Russell

## Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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