

SC039087

Registered provider: Care Afloat Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service is registered to accommodate one young person who has emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The service is privately owned. It provides young people with single-occupancy accommodation on a 71-foot narrowboat which travels the canal network.

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and was registered to manage the setting in 2017.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 January 2019

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: 7 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/11/2017	Full	Good
05/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/05/2016	Full	Good
24/03/2016	Interim	Sustained 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 registered person must ensure that within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(c))	28/02/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b) With particular reference to staff receiving supervision in timescales laid out in the company's guidelines and expectations.	28/02/2019
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6(2)(vii))	28/02/2019
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(f))	31/03/2019

Recommendations

- Children should have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning, unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19) In particular, that equipment provided should be of appropriate quality to meet the additional demands of a mobile service.
- The importance of who we are and where we come from is recognised in good social work practice, for example through undertaking life story work or other direct work. Staff in a children's home should play a full role in work of this kind. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page

16, paragraph 3.14) In particular, that young people should be supported to explore contact arrangements.

- Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal high, drugs and tobacco. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person feels cared for and valued as an individual. Commenting on the care that he received, he said: 'These treat me good.' The notable progress that the young person has made includes attendance at education and greater adherence to boundaries and expectations regarding acceptable behaviour.

Staff are flexible in their approach to caring for young people and they continuously adapt the care offered as their understanding of the young person increases. This, over time, enables young people to develop trusting relationships with staff.

Young people receive educational input that combines both practical and formal classroom learning. As a result, the young person is now engaged in a wide range of learning that supports his future aspirations. Previous to this, the young person had refused to attend education or engage with the care that was being offered.

Although young people may initially reject formal settings such as a classroom, staff are persistent in their encouragement and reintegration into education. However, the young person does not have access to a computer or the internet to support learning when at the accommodation.

Staff work hard to support the future care plans for young people. As a result, the young person now has increased family contact and their relationships have improved. A parent commenting on how well staff liaise with them said: 'You feel part of what is going on.' However, opportunities to fully explore with the young person contact with wider family members have been missed.

Staff offer lots of different activities and, over time, young people benefit from trying new pursuits. This enables the young people to explore and develop their interests and establish healthy alternatives to criminal or anti-social activities.

The main form of accommodation has undergone refurbishment and the young person commented that he enjoyed living on a boat. However, young people have not always been provided with the physical necessities that they may need in order to live there comfortably.

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

The young person has become significantly safer since being with the service. There have not been any incidents of missing from home, whereas previously there were frequent and prolonged missing incidents. The young person feels safe with his carers and was able to reflect on the positive changes that have resulted in his life.

This sense of security is underpinned by a stable and consistent staff team that understands the young person well. Staff are clear about boundaries and expectations and young people over time respond to this clarity. The young person considered that staff were fair in how they dealt with incidents of 'misbehaviour' and that he had developed greater personal responsibility for his actions.

Staff actively promote positive behaviour and effectively use de-escalation techniques to avoid conflict and possible misunderstanding. On occasions when it has been necessary to use restraint, the young person has not always been spoken to by the manager or designated person who had not been involved in the restraint.

There have not been any complaints or allegations made since the last inspection. Any safeguarding concerns have been dealt with promptly by the staff in liaison with other safeguarding professionals.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and was registered to manage the setting in 2017.

She leads a highly committed and stable staff team. This offers young people predictable care from staff who are well known to them and with whom they have developed relationships.

The manager has a good insight into the young person's needs, vulnerabilities, strengths and the progress they make. She is active in advising and leading staff in ensuring that the young person's care remains individualised and appropriate to their needs.

The manager provides on-going daily liaison and support to the staff team. Formal supervision of staff is well recorded. However, the frequency of supervision for some staff does not meet the organisation's expectations.

The staff work well as a team and there is a shared ownership in providing good-quality care for young people. As a result, the young person has made progress in many areas of their life. However, areas that have proved difficult to change have not benefited from a clear plan of intervention. Opportunities to measure, evaluate and improve support offered have been missed.

There is good day-to-day managerial oversight of the young person's care. However, plans to ensure the continuous improvement of the service have not been updated and fully evaluated for their impact.

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: SC039087

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Afloat Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Michael Fletcher

Registered manager: Claire Russell

Inspector

Pauline Yates, social care inspector

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