

SC039087

Registered provider: Care Afloat Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is registered to accommodate one young person who may have 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: 9 to 10 March 2020

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 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/01/2019	Full	Good
07/11/2017	Full	Good
05/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/05/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who have not had their needs met in other settings make progress in the home. The current young person being cared for at the home has experienced a significant period of stability and developed a sense of permanence.

The young person is supported by staff who have come to know her well and understand her individual needs. The stability of the staff team means that she receives a consistently good quality of care from a core group of adults. This has meant that she has built trusting and secure relationships.

The young person is attending and engaged with further education. She has gained some qualifications and is working towards furthering these achievements. Staff ensure that the narrowboat remains in the vicinity of the college during term time. This supports good attendance.

The young person has been supported by staff to access new activities and rekindle existing interests. These include one-to-one swimming classes and horse riding. These opportunities to engage with other people in the wider community have increased her confidence and social skills. This will help her as she moves towards independence.

The young person receives regular specialist therapeutic support commissioned by the organisation. The young person told the inspectors that this was the first therapist she had felt able to trust and build a relationship with. As a result, she is receiving the help needed to address past trauma and build resilience for the future.

The young person feels confident to share her views about her care. She has contributed to improvements in the environment within the home. The ability to work with those adults around her in a constructive way will help her negotiate and manage her relationships in other settings in the future.

A young person who left the home since the last inspection was supported to do so in a positive manner. The manager and staff did what they were able to ensure that the placement ended well, despite it being a very challenging time for all concerned. As a result, the young person was helped to see the progress he had made during his time at the home.

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

Staff understand the risks that young people face. These are well identified and plans are in place and followed in practice. In addition, young people are supported to take age and developmentally appropriate risks. This helps young people to grow in self-confidence and take on new challenges.

Physical restraint of young people is rare. There have only been two incidents of physical intervention since the last inspection. The recording of one of these incidents contains conflicting information. This has not been addressed by the registered manager in her evaluation of the incident. As a result, potential opportunities to reflect on and improve practice have been missed.

The young person does not go missing. This is a positive development and evidences the progress she has made in the setting. This contributes to the overall stability and quality of her experience of being cared for at the home.

Case records are, for the most part, comprehensive and well structured. In two instances, the recording of independent return home interviews for the previous young person in placement was inaccurate. On both occasions, the record contained the wrong name for the young person. This was not identified by staff, meaning this incorrect information has remained on file.

The physical environment for young people is safe. Staff have well-established health and safety systems in place. These ensure that young people are safeguarded when the narrowboat is moored in a variety of locations as well as when it is moving along the waterways. Staff have all the required qualifications, skills and knowledge to manage the boat effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is well established in her role. Although she is not based on the boat on a day-to-day basis, she maintains a good level of management oversight of the home. She is well respected by the staff team.

There are effective systems in place for collating information about the quality of care of young people. One member of staff now has responsibility for providing monthly reports to the registered manager. These are used to inform day-to-day practice as well as contributing to the formal six-monthly reviews of the quality of care. The registered manager's quality of care reports lack evaluation. They do not contain any information in relation to identified areas for development.

Quality of care reports that have regard to the progress and experiences of each young person and that inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home were a requirement of the last inspection. This requirement is not met.

Young people benefit from a stable and committed staff team. Staff work well together and have strong and positive relationships. There is currently only one female member of staff. This has at times necessitated the registered manager providing some additional support to the team when a better gender balance was needed. Also, as a result, young people do not have the benefit of experiencing a diverse range of role models from within the staff team.

Staff are well supported by regular supervision, which is of a good quality. Records of supervision are clearly recorded. Staff receive annual appraisals which provide opportunities to reflect on and improve practice. There are regular opportunities for staff to undertake training and there is a clear training plan in place. This means that staff have good systems in place to support and challenge their practice with young people.

The manager has a good knowledge of the needs of young people and the ability of the home to meet these needs. Where young people can no longer be cared for safely in the home, she works to ensure that transitions to new settings are positive. The manager works effectively in partnership with external agencies to ensure that young people make progress and are kept safe.

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 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— 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))	30 April 2020

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4).

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

Inspectors

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector
Michelle Bacon, Social Care Inspector

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