

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 run by a private organisation and is registered to care for one child who may experience social and emotional difficulties and be experiencing a period of difficulty or crisis.

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

The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2017.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 December 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: 19 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/07/2022	Full	Good
09/03/2020	Full	Good
08/01/2019	Full	Good
07/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have built trusting and positive relationships with the child. The manager and staff place the child's welfare at the centre of their practice and treat the child with dignity and respect. Staff actively seek the child's views and wishes. The child said that if they have any worries or problems they can talk to the staff and they will help.

When the child has raised a complaint, leaders have made sure that this has been suitably investigated and a clear response given to the child. This means that the child feels listened to and their views and feelings are valued.

The manager and staff work with placing authorities and families to promote and facilitate positive and meaningful family time in line with agreed plans. The child is also supported to spend time with friends. This means that they have the opportunity to have age appropriate social interactions. This helps them to develop skills and strategies to form and maintain relationships.

The child is supported to engage with education. Although this is not classroom-based education, the staff and school have worked together to create a bespoke plan which meets the child's current educational needs. There are plans in place to support the child to re-engage into the classroom.

The child currently living at the home moved from another provision in the company. Staff worked with the child, placing authority and the previous placement to ensure that there was a child-centred plan in place and that they were welcomed sensitively into their new home.

The child has a wide range of activities offered to them. Due to the nature of the service the child is able to embrace their hobby of fishing on the canal. Staff support and encourage this passion; this means the child is able to develop their skills and gain a sense of their own identity.

One child has moved on from the home. The manager and staff supported their move in a compassionate and nurturing manner despite the complex and difficult circumstances surrounding the move.

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

When significant events occur, leaders and managers respond swiftly and investigate appropriately. The manager usually notifies Ofsted of significant events. However, there has been one occasion where a notification was not sent, this impacts on the external monitoring of children's safety and welfare.

Each child's individual risks are detailed in their risk assessments and plans. These are robust documents which are frequently updated and give clear guidance to staff to ensure that there are consistent responses to children's behaviours. Staff understand these documents and put them into practice.

When a child has gone missing from care there are clear and comprehensive plans in place for staff to follow. The manager and staff work collaboratively with external professionals to ensure that there is a well-coordinated response to the missing from home episode. Staff use the plans to support the child to return home quickly and safely. The manager has added oversight onto these reports, however, these do not detail whether staff took appropriate action or identify lessons learnt to prevent reoccurrences.

Positive achievements are suitably praised and rewarded. When it has been necessary to impose consequences, these have been reasonable and proportionate. However, there is not always manager's oversight recorded and the effectiveness of these measures is not evaluated.

Staff make sure that the child's routine health needs are met. The child is supported and encouraged to attend routine health appointments and medication reviews. The health assessment for the child is not held on file and the recording of medication is not always completed in full, particularly when the child has refused to take medication. This means there is not a clear record of medication administration.

Regular direct-work sessions take place with the child to support their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. These are completed proactively, as well as in response to significant events.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. The manager is also registered for a second home and splits her management time between the two homes. She has the support of a deputy manager and a consistent staff team. Staff are positive about the manager and describe a supportive environment.

The manager and deputy have effective oversight of the home. They make use of external and internal monitoring systems; this enables them to identify and address any issues that may arise and to make positive improvements to the quality of care they provide.

The manager and staff have positive working relationships with partner agencies, schools and family members. This ensures that the child is at the centre of a network of support and as a result, has the best possible experiences. The inspector received feedback from a family member who said, '[Name of child] has come on leaps and bounds since being on the boat. The staff have been great'.

Most staff have up-to-date mandatory training. However, one staff member has not yet completed safeguarding training and for another staff member, their refresher

training for safeguarding is out of date. In addition to this, there are also some gaps in staff training to meet the child's individual needs such as, trauma and attachment, drug misuse, internet safety and exploitation.

Staff take part in regular supervisions and have their fitness to perform their role appraised annually. Supervision is practice related and is a supportive tool for staff. In addition to this, team meetings take place regularly and are well attended by all on the team. They are an opportunity for the staff team to get together and share information and reflect on their practice.

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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff have completed safeguarding training and training to meet the child's individual needs.	5 February 2024
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that a record is kept of each occasion when a child declines to take prescribed medication.	5 February 2024
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;	5 February 2024

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.

A notification made under this regulation—

must include details of—

the matter;

the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and

any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter.

(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they review incidents and significant events proactively, implementing lessons learnt and evaluating the effectiveness of strategies used. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that the child's health is assessed at regular intervals and that health assessments and plans provided by health professionals are available for the child and staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.4)

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

Inspector

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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