

SC052744

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care and accommodation for up to five children with complex emotional, social, communication and learning needs, including autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder.

The registered manager has been registered since 4 June 2018.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 July 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: 11 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2018	Full	Good
20/06/2017	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/12/2016	Full	Requires improvement

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11) In particular, the review of the quality of care report, under regulation 45, should show what children say about their experiences of living in the home and the care they receive, and how their views are being used to improve the standard of care and support that they receive.
- Children's behaviour management plans must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34) In particular, help staff understand and use consistently the strategies to best support each child to manage their emotions. Ensure that each child's behaviour support plan includes the strategies devised by the psychologist to work with the child and any learning taken from the review of serious incidents.
- The review of serious incidents and the use of restraints should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) In particular, ensure that the manager and staff reflect critically on their responses to children struggling to manage their emotions and the effectiveness of the steps taken to avoid the need to use physical intervention or call the police for assistance to manage the situation.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children with complex needs live in a friendly, nurturing and positive home. They get the help that they need to recover from traumatic and adverse experiences. Staff give children the warmth, stability, structure and consistency that they need to feel safe and build secure attachments. Consequently, children are making measurable, and often remarkable, progress in their education, health, emotional well-being, building positive relationships, self-esteem, managing their feelings and becoming safer from harm.

The manager makes good decisions about children coming to live at the home. She carefully matches the child and staff's ability to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. When there are gaps in the staff's expertise, the manager makes sure

that staff have training relevant to the child's specific care needs before the child moves in. The manager also assesses the child's compatibility with the children already living at the home.

Staff make sure that children get help and encouragement to support their education and learning. All of the children go to school and college every day. Children are making incredible progress. Their engagement and enjoyment of learning have improved significantly since coming to live at the home.

When children struggle in school, staff, teachers and psychologists work together positively to make sure that the child gets the support to help them do well. For example, a child's ability to learn, concentrate, achieve and manage his feelings in school has improved since moving to a different venue. He is also feeling confident enough to go on work experience.

Children take part in carefully chosen activities designed for them to have fun, and to help keep them healthy, safe, physically fit and active. Outdoor activities are helping children to develop their confidence, self-esteem and social skills as well as helping them to build friendships. Children are overcoming their fears, trying new and exciting things, and encouraging each other to take part.

Staff make sure that children have the skills, opportunities and emotional resilience they need to become adults. They help children to build confidence in travelling independently, cooking, shopping and managing their own money. Staff also help children to understand and manage risks as they get older. Staff also put in place effective support that each child needs to manage their safety.

The manager and staff make sure that children living far from their home area receive the support and services that they need locally and that this help is available as soon as it is required. When services are not readily available, the manager challenges the placing authority and partner agencies. She has worked extremely hard to get local health services to accept responsibility for children's care and treatment.

Children living away from the families get to see and speak to them regularly, regardless of the distances involved. The manager and staff make sure that seeing their families is a safe and positive experience for the children.

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

Staff's knowledge and professional practice protect children from harm. The quality of care that children receive has helped them to develop a sense of safety and well-being. Children have healthy and secure relationships with the staff. They trust the staff and know that staff listen to their worries and will always try their best to help them.

Guided by up-to-date and well-informed risk assessments and plans, staff act to reduce the dangers to children's safety. Children are increasingly safe from the risks of neglect, abuse, exploitation, harmful relationships, self-harm and going missing from home.

Staff know the children exceptionally well and recognise when something is wrong through children's behaviour. Staff take decisive action when they have serious concerns about children. They use well-established partnerships with children's services, the designated officer, the police and support services to identify and understand the risks facing children and take appropriate action when needed that protects them.

Staff work positively and confidently with each child to find the best way possible to help the child understand and manage their feelings. The manager and staff use restorative approaches to help children to learn the skills to sort out problems constructively and understand the impact of their actions on other people. After disagreements and serious incidents, the use of mediation has helped to repair and build relationships between children, and between children and staff.

However, the therapeutic approaches that are being used by a psychologist with some children are not included in the children's support plans. Consequently, staff do not have the information they need to understand and use these approaches consistently with the children.

Staff's patient and understanding approach helps children when they are having trouble coping with their emotions. The staff use well-planned strategies to help children manage unsafe and aggressive behaviour and as a result the frequency and severity of children's aggressive behaviour have reduced, and they are spending less time in crisis.

When children are having a difficult time and need to be held, staff use restraint appropriately. Staff use the minimal force necessary to protect the child and other people. The length of time that children are held is usually less than a minute. The manager reviews carefully the use of restraint to make sure that it was correctly applied.

However, the manager's reviews of the use of restraint are not sufficiently detailed to identify all the possible learning from the incident. The reviews lack in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of what staff did to try to calm the situation and avoid the need to hold the child. What children say about the incident is not always used to develop a better understanding of the child's needs and how best to help them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is an effective, thorough and confident leader. Her child-focused approach has created a positive and aspirational environment that is improving the lives of children with complex and challenging needs.

The manager leads a caring, experienced, knowledgeable management and staff team. Staff have the confidence and skills to meet the children's individual needs. The manager and staff work hard to make sure that children live in a safe and nurturing home. They provide children with the quality and continuity of care necessary for children to build secure and healthy relationships with the adults looking after them.

The manager and staff have a detailed understanding of each child's progress and the priorities for their care. They identify when children are struggling and are determined to understand and work through the difficulties to improve things.

The manager actively brings the wider support network together to deal with the problems that children are experiencing. She makes sure that local authorities and health services provide children with the best possible support at the time when they need it.

The manager uses thorough monitoring systems to make improvements in the quality of care that children receive, including introducing a restorative approach to help children understand about acceptable behaviour. The manager has also used the suggestions from the independent person's monitoring reports to improve the quality of restraint records and to make sure that children and staff always have the chance to talk about what happened when children have been restrained.

The manager, deputy manager and senior members of staff provide each member of staff with very good support, guidance and encouragement. Staff have enough time in practice-related supervision and team meetings to reflect on their practice and their development needs and the needs, experiences and progress of children.

Staff receive good-quality training programmes, advice and guidance tailored to the personal needs and diagnosis of the children in their care. They are also supported to develop their knowledge and skills and complete the necessary qualifications.

However, children's views about their experiences living in the home are not always used to inform and support the continued development of the quality of care they receive. Reports for children's review meetings and the review of the quality of care report do not show what children say about their care and how best to help them. Likewise, the reports do not show how their views are being used to improve the standard of care and their lived experience.

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: SC052744

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Registered provider address: Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

Responsible individual: Anthony Nolan

Registered manager: Tracy Friel

Inspector

Nick Veysey, social care inspector

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