

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 young people who may have autism spectrum disorder and/or learning disabilities.

The registered manager has been registered since 4 June 2018.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 July 2018

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: 20 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
20/06/2017	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/12/2016	Full	Requires improvement
01/03/2016	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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that each child— has access to the home's children's guide, and home's complaint procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home. (Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c) and (2)(b)(ii)) In particular, the children's guide must be age appropriate and provided in an accessible format to make sure that each child understands it.	31/08/2018
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 to 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) and (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that staff receive good-quality training programmes along with advice and guidance tailored to the personal needs of children, including developing staff's knowledge of autism spectrum disorder, global development delay, sensory needs, methods of communication, mental health, autism and sexual development, deprivation of liberty and working with	31/08/2018

abused children.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once a year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	30/09/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that the timescale and frequency for staff receiving the supervision of their practice is included in their supervision agreement, supervision policy and the workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Ensure that enough time is allocated for the supervision of staff practice to allow staff to reflect critically on their practice and their development needs and the needs, experiences and progress of children. It is good practice to record the agreed actions from supervision sessions to clearly show the specific tasks and the timescales for completing them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraphs 13.2 & 13.4)
- 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) In particular, make sure that written agreements about children's use of wi-fi, the internet and social media use clear and precise language; for example, showing what is meant by 'inappropriate sites' and 'negative behaviour'.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children with autism spectrum disorder and complex needs live in a friendly, nurturing and comfortable family home. The manager and staff provide children with a good standard of personalised care that brings stability to their lives. Staff are skilled at building warm and reliable relationships with children. Children enjoy positive experiences and get the help and opportunities that they need to develop.

Staff make sure that every child, regardless of the way they communicate, has a voice. They help children to have their views, wishes and feelings heard. Staff help children to be involved in the decisions about their lives, including choices about education, their day-to-day care, the decoration of the house, and the plans for their future.

Effective care planning and good working relationships between the manager and social workers make sure that this home is the right place for each child to live. The manager assesses carefully that the staff can respond successfully to the child's needs, and that the child will fit in well with the other children. Her decision-making is accurate. The two children who have moved in recently are making good progress.

The manager and staff make sure that children get the support that they need to take part in education, enjoy learning and achieve their potential. Children usually go to school every day and are doing very well. Most of the children enjoy taking part in every aspect of school life, including Cubs, being in the choir and being involved in the school council.

The manager and staff work closely with teachers. Staff have a detailed understanding of each child's progress, plans and individual targets. For example, staff are using the same approach as the school to help a child improve his spoken language.

Children have the same opportunities as other children their age to have fun, enjoy new experiences and take part in activities in the community. Children are becoming more confident in spending time with other children, for example joining in a game of football in the park.

Staff help children to learn practical skills and to become more independent. Children are encouraged to manage their personal care, as well as being encouraged to use money, go shopping and to enjoy cooking and baking. Staff are supporting an older child to prepare for starting college and the transition to adult life. The staff are using a well-thought-out plan that is tailored to the child's needs, level of understanding and what she feels is important for her to know. This includes helping her to know how to be safe in the community, how to send text messages, use cash machines and travel using public transport.

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

The manager and staff make sure that children live in a safe home environment and that they are protected from harm. Children feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging. They know that they can talk to staff about their worries and that staff will help them to be safe.

The manager and staff are vigilant and recognise when something is wrong. They take appropriate action when they have concerns about children. Staff work effectively with social workers, local authorities, the police and mental health workers to protect children from harm and to get them the right support.

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities associated with their health, disability and level of understanding. Staff use up-to-date and individualised assessments and plans to reduce the risks to children's safety, including from bullying, abuse, self-harm, radicalisation and crossing the road.

Staff make sure that children have a suitable level of adult supervision at home and while in the community. They balance carefully the need to protect children with providing opportunities to take controlled risks as part of their personal development, such as using public transport and going to the shops by themselves.

Staff help children to be aware of risks and to manage their safety. They help children to understand about healthy relationships, how to use the internet and social media safely, and to ask for help when they are worried. The manager has encouraged children to devise their own wi-fi and social media plans as a means of exploring their awareness of the potential dangers. However, the language used in plans lacks the clarity needed to help

children understand what is meant by 'inappropriate sites' and 'negative behaviour'.

Staff understand how children's experiences, their level of understanding and changes in their lives affect their feelings and behaviour. Staff, therefore, provide children with the structure, consistent routines and secure relationships that they need to feel safe. Staff work hard to find out and understand the reasons why children are upset. Their calm and confident way of working helps children when they are having a difficult time.

Staff use insightful strategies that help children manage their feelings and behaviour. They intervene calmly and confidently. They speak to children in ways that they find easy to understand, such as going step by step through the child's plan and not overloading the child with too much information. Staff reassure children and help to calm things down so that they sort out the problem together. For example, the manager letting a child know who will collect him from school each day has helped the child not to get upset.

The manager thoroughly reviews serious incidents and when staff have used restraint to support a child. This review includes talking to the child and the staff about what happened. The manager makes sure that the staff have supported the child safely using the least intrusive way possible and look at ways to better help the child in the future.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is now registered with Ofsted and is working towards completing the recognised management qualification. She is a highly competent leader who has brought stability and consistency to the management of the home. She has created a nurturing and positive environment that is improving the lives of children with autism spectrum disorder and complex needs.

The manager uses thorough and evaluative monitoring systems to understand the quality of care that children receive and its impact on children's experiences and outcomes. She has a realistic view of the priorities for developing the service, including the development of staff's expertise in supporting children with autism spectrum disorder and complex needs, improving the cohesiveness of the staff team, and the development of reflective practice to continue to improve the quality of care and support that children receive.

Staff are enthusiastic and focused on providing each child with the best possible help. Well-planned staffing arrangements make sure that there are always enough suitable and experienced staff available to meet the needs of each child. Children are always looked after by people that they get to know well.

The manager, deputy manager and senior members of staff provide each member of staff with good support, guidance and encouragement daily as well as through practice-related supervision and regular team meetings.

However, the workforce plan, staff supervision policy and agreements do not explicitly set out the expected frequency for staff supervision. It is good practice to agree on a suitable timescale for each member of staff based on their experience, competence and development needs. The duration of supervision meetings does not always provide enough time to allow staff to reflect critically on their practice and their learning needs and the needs, experiences and progress of children. The records of supervision meetings do not

always show the tasks that have been agreed and the timescale for completing them. Also, the staff's performance and fitness to carry out their role have not been formally reviewed regularly.

Staff would benefit from opportunities to continue to build their confidence, skills and professional practice relevant to the needs of the children that they are supporting. This would include developing staff's knowledge of autism spectrum disorder, global development delay, sensory needs, methods of communication, mental health, sexual development, the deprivation of liberty, and working with abused children.

The children's guide does not provide children with information about the home, their rights and how they will be looked after, in ways that they can easily understand, considering their age, level of understanding and means of communication.

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: Quality Protects Children Limited, 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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