

# SC055153

Registered provider: Care Afloat Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This mobile service is privately owned and is registered to accommodate three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It provides alternative accommodation from one to 52 weeks, which incorporates activity-based intervention work.

Locations will vary, as young people will use a variety of accommodation and facilities, including camping and bunkhouse facilities, caravans and cottages, as well as a narrow boat and yacht.

**Inspection dates:** 6 to 7 November 2018

**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:** 13 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 13/11/2017      | Full            | Good                   |
| 23/01/2017      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |
| 27/06/2016      | Full            | Good                   |
| 01/02/2016      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Due date   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) | 30/11/2018 |
| The registered person must ensure that within five days of the use of the measure of control, the registered person or authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (4)).                   | 30/11/2018 |
| In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—<br>(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))                                                       | 31/01/2019 |
| The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))                                                                                                      | 30/11/2018 |

### Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

From their starting points, young people make progress in their lives and this includes a significant reduction in behaviours that previously posed a risk to their safety and welfare. For example, professionals spoken to referred to this service as 'breaking the cycle' of exploitation and criminal behaviours for young people.

Young people are given time away from previous influences and offered alternative

experiences that support them to make positive changes in their lives. This in turn enables young people to better engage with education and therapeutic services.

Staff quickly establish healthy routines that ensure that young people have good sleep patterns and have regular physical exercise. The various locations used by staff to accommodate young people are such that outdoor amenities are a primary source of activities that are offered. This includes kayaking, climbing, fell walking and young people learning teamwork on the boat that is used.

Although placements for young people can be for a relatively short duration, staff work hard at establishing positive and trusting relationships with young people. These relationships are strengthened and maintained through staff giving young people clear expectations and boundaries with regards to behaviours. This is further encouraged by incentives being set, for example positive engagement in education resulting in a tour of Old Trafford football grounds.

The young person in placement felt particularly welcomed by staff on his arrival at the service and considered that this welcome had assisted him in settling. He commented: 'I got a really good welcome. 'X' [member of staff] convinced me to make the most of it. I took to him.'

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

Most young people who are placed with the service either have a significant reduction in incidents of going missing from home, or these incidents cease completely. The service makes effective use of the multiple sites to offer young people the most appropriate facility to bring about these changes.

When young people do go missing from home, the manager quickly reviews the facilities and changes are made to offer a greater level of safety to young people. For example, a more rural setting may be chosen that offers less opportunity for young people to easily access the use of trains.

Staff are active in searching for, locating and returning the young people when they have been missing. One social worker commented: 'The effort they have put into finding him is remarkable. They clearly show the child how important he is.'

Staff work hard to keep young people safe. This is underpinned through a clear understanding of young people's histories and the effort that is put into forging positive relationships. A social worker commented: 'The previous placements did not understand the emotional impact and why he was running away. They completely and absolutely understand him. I've never seen him engage with staff as well as he does now.'

However, young people have not benefited from independent return home interviews when they have been missing. Contributory factors to these omissions are young people being placed a long way from their home areas and local arrangements not being successfully negotiated with the placing local authorities.

Staff recently recruited to work at the service have been employed using appropriate checks to ensure that young people are not exposed to people who may pose a risk to their safety and welfare.

Overall, staff manage behaviour effectively through incentives, rewards and positive relationships. However, on some occasions, when physical intervention has been necessary, the young person has not always been spoken to about the use of the measure.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager is suitably qualified and has been registered to manage the service since 2014. She is supported by a dedicated staff team that is committed to the type of service that is provided, making a difference to young people's lives.

The manager has a clear understanding of the young people who use the service and the progress they make. This is particularly strengthened by the manager regularly writing the progress reports and ongoing liaison with the placing local authorities.

The management team takes a collaborative approach in working with other professionals to ensure that young people receive the best possible care to meet their needs.

Staff receive appropriate levels of supervision and appraisal from the management team. In addition, the manager has an 'open-door' policy that facilitates conversations, advice and general support to staff outside of the formal supervisory process.

There are sufficient staff to ensure that young people receive high levels of supervision and that staff rotas are appropriately covered. However, the proportion of qualified staff is only one third of the total staff team.

Young people know how to complain, and the manager has responded in a timely manner to any such complaints or allegations. However, the recording of managerial enquiries and investigations is not thorough, and the outcome is not always recorded.

Staff and managers do not benefit from having up-to-date documents relating to young people's care, for example care plans, education, health and care plans or placement plans. This limits staff insight into young people's needs that can be derived from such documents.

## **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:** SC055153

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Care Afloat Limited

**Registered provider address:** 158 Birkrig, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 9HP

**Responsible individual:** Michael Fletcher

**Registered manager:** Nichola Fairhurst

## Inspector

Pauline Yates, social care inspector

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