

# SC061678

Registered provider: Care Assist Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living in the home.

There is a manager in post who registered with Ofsted in November 2022.

### Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
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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:** 1 April 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 01/04/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 07/12/2021      | Full            | Inadequate           |
| 24/08/2021      | Full            | Inadequate           |
| 12/12/2019      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

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

Children have made good progress in all aspects of their lives because of the highly individualised care and support that they receive from staff. Managers and staff know the children well; they are sensitive to each child's individual needs and strive to deliver consistently good care.

Relationships between children and staff are a strength in this home. Staff understand the importance of building relationships that are based on trust and respect for one another. Each child is treated with dignity by staff who respect their individuality.

Children are supported to understand the importance of education and are encouraged to improve their attendance. When children are struggling to engage with their education, staff listen to them and help them to overcome any barriers to their learning. The manager and staff work in partnership with a range of external agencies to ensure that children's educational needs are being met.

Staff help children to develop their independence skills. One child told the inspector, 'I would not know how to do anything for myself if it wasn't for the staff.' The manager and staff have high aspirations for children and work with agencies to provide a range of learning and job opportunities for children.

Children's health needs are well understood by the staff team. Children are encouraged to attend their routine appointments. When required, referrals to specialist services are made swiftly, to ensure that children have access to the right help and support in relation to their health.

Staff recognise the importance of children having regular and positive time with their families. The manager and staff have built good relationships with parents. One parent said, 'The manager goes above and beyond for the children and for us.'

Children enjoy a range of activities, such as boxing, trips out and going to youth clubs. These positive experiences support them to lead healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for them to spend time with peers.

Children have not raised any complaints since moving to the home. They are provided with a children's guide which includes the process for making complaints. However, the children's guide has not been reviewed with children. The format of the guide is not child-friendly and the complaints procedure is not clear. Furthermore, children are not provided with sufficient information about advocacy support or how to access this.

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

Managers and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and take swift and effective action to minimise the risks to children.

Staff respond effectively and work collaboratively with partner agencies when children are missing from the home. Staff understand the risks to children when they are missing. There are clear and individualised plans to support children and to reduce these risks. Managers and staff recognise the individual risk factors which may indicate a child is at increasing risk of harm and take swift action to escalate concerns.

Staff help children understand how to keep safe. They educate children about risks so that children can make positive choices in relation to their health and well-being.

There have not been any incidents of restraint since the last inspection. This indicates that staff are able to de-escalate challenging behaviour effectively. Children are supported to develop appropriate coping strategies to manage their behaviour and feelings safely.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted by staff. Children are supported to understand the boundaries and expectations around safe and acceptable behaviour. Staff respond to children individually and implement rewards that are specific to them.

One consequence has been imposed since the last visit. The records of this measure do not contain the detail that is required by regulation. A requirement has been made to support improvements in recording.

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

The home is managed by an experienced manager who demonstrates strong values and high ambition. The manager drives improvements in the quality of the care provided to children, by implementing thorough development plans and maximising opportunities to learn from practice and feedback.

The manager regularly reviews the quality of the care provided to children. Records of significant events are monitored effectively to ensure that staff are using these as learning opportunities and continually developing their practice.

Professional relationships are strong because the manager and staff work proactively with external agencies. These effective working relationships are ensuring high standards of care and promoting positive outcomes for the children who live in the home.

The manager does not use agency staff in the home, which means that children are always cared for by staff who know them well. Staff are provided with a range of training that means they have the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs.

Supervision practice is a strength. Supervision is regular and carried out in line with the home's statement of purpose. Staff are encouraged to be reflective and this supports the development of good practice.

The manager has carried out a review of the quality of care provided by the home. A detailed report was submitted to Ofsted within timescales; however, it lacked consultation with children and stakeholders.

Staff are recruited in line with safer recruitment processes. However, one staff file did not contain relevant information about a staff member's employment history.

## 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     |
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| <p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that each child—</p> <p>is given appropriate advocacy support;</p> <p>keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document;</p> <p>ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about—</p> <p>the children's guide;</p> <p>how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with; and</p> <p>what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision.</p> <p>(Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)(iii)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> | 21 June 2023 |

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| <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the children's guide is reviewed with children so that it contains information about the complaints procedure and advocacy support. Further to this, the registered person must ensure that this information is child-friendly.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                     |
| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that the registered person obtains a full employment history for each staff member and a written explanation of any gaps and that they have a copy of relevant training certificates for each staff member.</p> | <p>21 June 2023</p> |
| <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>21 June 2023</p> |

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| <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that they speak to the staff member who has given the consequence and the child who has received the consequence, within the necessary timescale, to capture their views about the consequence.</p> |                     |
| <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>21 June 2023</p> |

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.  
(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))

## Recommendation

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children's views are regularly sought by the independent person. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

## 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:** SC061678

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

**Registered provider:** Care Assist Children's Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** 42 Crosby Road North, Liverpool L22 4QQ

**Responsible individual:** Peter Jones

**Registered manager:** Kevin Caldwell

## Inspector

Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector

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