

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 two children living in the home.

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

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

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 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/04/2023	Full	Good
01/04/2022	Full	Good
07/12/2021	Full	Inadequate
24/08/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive and trusting relationships with staff who know them well. Managers and staff spoke fondly and passionately about the children. Children have plenty of opportunities to express their views, wishes and feelings in a way that meets their individual needs. Children said that they like the staff and can talk to them if they have any worries or concerns and staff will listen.

Children have access to wide range of activities; however, staff also respect that the children are at an age where they often prefer to spend time with their friends and family. This is supported in line with agreed plans and makes sure that children can maintain relationships that are meaningful and important to them.

Children's educational needs are met. One child has made significant improvements to their levels of attendance. This has meant that they are able to sit their GCSEs. Another child is supported to seek out training which will allow them to gain employment. There have been some challenges to this, however staff have worked alongside the child, family members and the placing authority to ensure that the child has access to suitable opportunities.

Staff support children to attend routine medical appointments such as the dentist, GP and opticians and they are also supported to attend specialist appointments when necessary. There are suitable arrangements for the safe storage and administration of medication. Any errors in medication have been acted upon and processes put in place to prevent re-occurrence.

Staff support children to gain independence skills which prepare them for adulthood. One child has moved on from the home successfully into their own flat. Staff supported them to ensure that they had access to the resources and funds available to them when they moved out. One social worker said, 'Staff went above and beyond to give [name of child] the skills they needed to live independently'.

One child who moved out did not have a positive end to their time at the home. The decision to end their placement was not child-centred and the child was not notified in a timely manner. This meant that the child could not prepare themselves for their move.

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

There have been no safeguarding concerns or issues since the last inspection. Staff have completed safeguarding training and staff spoken to were able to detail the action they would take should they be made aware of a concern.

When children have been missing from the home, staff are not following children's plans and are not taking suitable action to search and locate the children. There is no managers reflection or evaluation on reports to identify lessons learnt to prevent re-occurrence or to improve staff practice and review strategies within plans.

Each child's individual risks are detailed in their risk assessments and linked support plans. These are robust documents which are frequently updated and give clear guidance to staff to ensure that there is a consistent response to children's behaviour.

Children move into the home in a planned way. The manager ensures that impact assessments identify possible risks and any impact on other children living in the home and identifies that staff have the skills and training to meet the child's needs. This helps children to settle into their new home.

Direct work takes place with children around relevant topics, such as education, substance misuse and smoking cessation. These sessions are proactive but also delivered in response to emerging risks. The sessions are also used to give children the chance to explore their feelings and emotions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a registered manager in post who is supported by a deputy manager. Leaders and managers know the children well and have an ambitious vision for what the children can achieve.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with external professionals such as social workers, family support workers and school to ensure that there is a team around each child to ensure that there are positive outcomes.

The manager has suitable systems in place to ensure that he has oversight of the home and makes use of internal and external monitoring to identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, the quality-of-care review has not been sent to Ofsted in a timely manner, this affects external monitoring of the home.

There is a stable and consistent workforce. This means that children are looked after by staff they know well. Staff are trained in mandatory subjects and in areas to meet the children's individual needs.

Team meetings take place regularly, are well attended. They are an opportunity for staff to share information about the home and updates about the children. Staff also receive regular, practice related supervision. However, staff have not had their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised in the past year.

The manager ensures that the home environment is warm, welcoming and a nice place for children to spend time. The home has recently benefitted from a new kitchen and decoration throughout.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that when notice is served on a child's placement that it is proportionate and in the best interest of the child. In addition to this, the registered provider must ensure that the child is informed of the move in a timely manner to help them understand the reasons and to be involved in the planning for their move when this is appropriate.	31 May 2024
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;	31 May 2024

help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vi)(vii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that when children are missing from the home, staff take appropriate action to locate them and return them home. Any action taken must be recorded and evaluated by the registered person.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	31 May 2024
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. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (3) (4)(a))	31 May 2024

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

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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