

SC062013

Registered provider: After Care NW Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three children who may have complex needs, including social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since April 2022.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

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: 30 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/03/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/08/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is warm and welcoming. There are many photos on the living room wall which display positive images of children. This gives children a sense of belonging and ownership. A member of staff said, 'I absolutely love working here. It feels like home.'

Children develop good relationships with the staff team, which enables them to talk openly about their feelings. Independent advocates also support children. This helps children to develop social skills while building resilience and self-confidence.

Staff encourage children to pursue hobbies and interests. As a result, children are learning new skills and trying different activities. This helps children to develop emotionally and socially, while also nurturing their self-identity. One member of staff said, 'I enjoy coming to the home and do not see it as a job motivating them to get out and about to enjoy their childhood.'

Children attend weekly meetings to raise issues and to discuss activities and meals for the week ahead. This gives them a sense of ownership and helps them to develop negotiating skills.

Children are making very good progress and feel safe in their home. One social worker said, 'Staff have been great. [Name of child] is thriving and making excellent progress.'

Staff help children to manage their health needs. Children register with doctors and dentists and access support from a wide range of other services. This means that children's routine appointments and checks are up to date.

Staff do not encourage children to access their files or contribute to them. This affects children's ability to reflect on their progress and experiences. It also means that children's records do not reflect their voices.

Children explore equality and diversity issues with staff. This raises their awareness of different cultures and beliefs. The diversity of the staff team promotes an inclusive and welcoming environment.

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

The registered manager is aware of the risks associated with the location of the home. She reviews children's needs to manage risks and to ensure that the location remains suitable.

Each child has a detailed and individualised action plan in case they go missing from the home. Staff support children to understand the risks involved with going missing

from care and complete key-work sessions with them. This currently prevents children from going missing.

Children feel safe and supported living in the home. Staff provide a strong response to safeguard children and work closely with agencies. An independent reviewing officer said, 'I have been impressed by the care provided by the staff team. They work to the care plan and respond appropriately to [name of child]'s needs.'

Staff use de-escalation techniques to help children to manage their behaviour. This reduces the need for physical interventions. This means that staff maintain positive and healthy working relationships with children.

Children's risk management plans are clear and well presented. This helps staff to understand and manage risks. However, plans do not include consideration of the increase in risk when children leave the home.

The registered manager follows safer recruitment procedures to ensure children's safety. The stable staff team provides consistent support to help children feel safe and protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is newly registered for this home. She is developing new systems to improve care and support for children. As a result, staff feel better supported, and children are making good progress. A member of staff said, 'The manager is staff centred and motivates the team very well. Always willing to listen and work with everyone. She's a gem.'

The registered manager challenges the local authority to ensure that children's educational needs are met. As a result, children are attending education full time and are making progress. One teacher said, '[Name of child] is happy and he is always well presented. They obviously care a lot for him.'

The registered manager does not complete a regular review of the quality of care. This limits their understanding of children's experiences in the home. It also hinders the manager's evaluation of children's outcomes and improvements.

Staff feel very well supported by the leadership team. They attend monthly supervision sessions with their manager. This helps staff to reflect on their work and to provide consistent levels of care. However, staff do not attend an annual appraisal. This affects their ability to reflect on their performance and limits their personal development.

The manager maintains a record of staff training to ensure that all training is up to date. However, staff do not consistently complete training which is detailed in children's plans. This affects their ability to provide specialised care for children.

Leaders and managers listen to children and help them to reflect on incidents. This promotes self-awareness and helps them to manage their behaviour. Leaders also review incidents with staff to promote learning and improve practice.

The registered manager is developing close working relationships with a range of partners. This is promoting a multi-agency approach and is improving communication across different services. As a result, children's plans are now clearer and reviewed on a regular basis. This is particularly relevant for children who are placed at a distance from their placing authority.

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, the 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 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. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. 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; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. 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) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	6 May 2022

The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that each child’s relevant plans are followed. that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(iii)(c)(f))	31 May 2022
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 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) (2)(c)) In particular, this relates to meeting the individual support needs of each child which have been identified in their relevant plans.	10 June 2022
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 2022

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: SC062013

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: After Care NW Limited

Registered provider address: 45 Kensington Road, Southport, Lancashire PR9 0RT

Responsible individual: Timothy Blundell

Registered manager: Rosie Binfield

Inspector

Mark Woodbridge, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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