

SC062651

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children who have experienced trauma which has left them vulnerable and/or have difficulties managing their emotions. The aim of the home is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which the children can start to make positive choices and reduce their exposure to risks.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 26 January 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 December 2021

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: 10 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Full	Good
14/06/2018	Full	Good
25/10/2017	Full	Good
11/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently two children living at this home. Children have positive experiences and receive individualised support of a very good quality. Staff provide a nurturing approach to care, which creates stability and enables children to make progress from their starting points.

Children have aspirations to build their life skills, develop their independence and plan for their futures. The staff's approach empowers children to take increased responsibility towards daily activities and build up their free time. One child has successfully moved back into their family home, and another child moved in with a foster family due to the significant progress that they had made.

Staff actively support the children's education. Children who were not previously engaging in education now have improved levels of attendance. The staff work closely with school staff to address any barriers to learning that the children experience. For one child, this has meant that they have been able to re-sit their final school year to facilitate additional revision for their GCSEs. This improves the child's prospects and reduces the impact of previous gaps in their learning.

Children who move to the home are prepared well through visits and introductions that are personalised to their individual needs. Many children who have left the home stay in contact with the manager and staff. This is testament to the strong and lasting relationships that the children form with the staff team.

The staff support a range of exciting activities that meet children's interests. One child goes horse riding and undertakes voluntary work at a local stable. Another child went for a holiday to a theme park and regularly visits the cinema. These experiences have enhanced children's well-being and increased their social opportunities, despite the difficulties brought by COVID-19 restrictions in the past year.

Children's memories and achievements are excellently documented through personalised keepsakes including photograph albums, memory boxes and comments of kindness from staff. These memorabilia are highly regarded by children and support their sense of belonging at the home.

The home is well-appointed. The children have personalised bedrooms that are decorated in line with their preferences. However, there are some minor decorative issues including doors that have worn paintwork, some missing light fixtures and a stained hallway carpet, all of which detract from what is otherwise a good-quality homely environment.

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

The skilled staff team forges strong relationships based on mutual respect with the children. Staff apply consistent boundaries which are understood by the children. Children who were previously at risk of going missing from home no longer do so because they develop the sense of security that they need to feel safe at the home.

Staff work well with children to help them to understand exploitation and its associated risks. Well-planned and effective one-to-one sessions cover important and emerging topics including community risks, managing healthy relationships and understanding the impact of substance misuse. This enhances children's emotional resilience skills and their understanding of their personal safety.

Managers and staff confront peer-on-peer abuse and explain to children why it is not acceptable. The staff have taken action to minimise this by supervising the children closely and encouraging effective reparation work. A clear approach has enabled the children to understand each other's emotions and resolve conflicts amicably.

The staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and they have good knowledge of procedures. Investigations into allegations or suspicion of harm are shared with the appropriate agencies and are handled consistently and fairly. This provides assurances that there are suitable systems in place to safeguard children.

The staff use positive reinforcement to successfully reduce unwanted behaviour. Physical interventions and consequential sanctions are used rarely and proportionately. However, for one child, the plans for using ground floor holds were not clear in relation to this intervention being used as a last resort in a crisis. This could lead to inconsistencies in staff's practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. Her practice is child focused and she has a strong presence at the home. The manager has developed a positive team culture that results in good-quality experiences and outcomes for children.

The staff benefit from regular, child-centred and responsive supervisions. Staff said that they feel well supported and motivated to develop their practice. Highly attended staff meetings ensure that effective communication and good support are embedded.

The staff work very well with social workers and parents. Families and professionals are extremely positive about the quality of care provided and the difference that this has made to each child.

The manager is aware of statutory entitlements for children and implements a good level of challenge and scrutiny to local authorities when these entitlements have not been met. In one instance, challenge to education services resulted in a timelier review of a child's education plan. For another child, appropriate challenge improved

the quality of a child's successful move to a foster family. This highlights that the manager focuses on what is important to children's development and their welfare.

The manager and staff value the importance of children's views about the home. The staff encourage high levels of participation through house meetings and one-to-one sessions. Children are clear on how to complain and receive objective responses to their concerns. This approach helps the children to express themselves and shape decisions about their care.

The staff take advantage of a wide range of training courses to equip them with the skills to meet the individual needs of the children. However, one staff member has not achieved a relevant level 3 qualification within the required timescales. The manager has put a plan in place to ensure that the staff member achieves this swiftly.

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
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))	24 March 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the hallway carpets and paint on internal doors are maintained to a consistently good standard. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly when any issues or trends of concern emerge. In particular, they should ensure that plans are clear and highlight the added scrutiny required when ground floor holds are used. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

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: SC062651

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, 168 Shoreditch High Street, London E1 6RA

Responsible individual: Jean Lloyd

Registered manager: Hayley Stoddart

Inspector

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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