

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 aged between 10 and 16 years who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024.

There is a registered school on site. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision on this site.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 November 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 13 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

The home was judged inadequate at the inspection on 13 August 2024. This led to a restriction of accommodation and compliance notices under regulation 12 and 13 being

issued. A monitoring visit took place on 30 September and found that the home had met the steps in the compliance notices, and the restriction of accommodation was lifted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/08/2024	Full	Inadequate
05/09/2023	Full	Good
20/07/2022	Full	Good
14/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home. Both children contributed to this inspection. Feedback from children was mixed. One child said that they were happy in the home, while another child said that they were unhappy and did not want to live there.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have continued to make improvements. The quality of the provision has improved as a result. However, these improvements remain a work in progress, and some require further embedding before a consistently good quality of service is provided.

On one occasion, staff did not seek appropriate medical support for a child until advised to do so by a mental health professional. Once 111 had been called, a doctor advised of their concern that the child had not been seen, and said they would send an ambulance. Although the subsequent health checks did not identify any physical health consequences from the delay, medical advice should have been sought sooner.

Children attend a school on site. Children are making progress in relation to their individual starting points, although attendance is inconsistent. One placing authority spoke particularly positively about the progress that a child has made with their education. Children's school day and lesson plans are arranged to meet the individual needs of each child, and their attendance at school is celebrated when they return home at the end of the day.

Children were seen to spend time in the communal areas of the home, laughing and engaging with staff. Children are involved in cooking the evening meals. Staff and children spend time at the dining room table talking and sharing mealtimes.

Children work towards free time outside of the home. This free time is carefully built up to ensure the safety of children. Children are involved in developing these free-time plans with the staff and their social workers. For example, one child worked towards a day trip to a big city.

Children have risk assessed access to mobile phones and the internet. Children are supported to learn to how keep safe online and to balance the use of their mobile phones with maintaining education and healthy sleeping routines.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers have overseen improvements in the quality of the help and protection afforded to children. However, despite the progress that has been made,

further improvements are needed, and some shortfalls remain. Most incidents have been managed sufficiently, but some incidents of poor practice have occurred.

On one occasion, following a physical intervention during which a child alleged they had been hurt by a member of staff, the child was taken for medical treatment by the person they alleged had harmed them. Although there was some limited discussion with the child about this, leaders and managers did not take appropriate action promptly. This left the child and the member of staff potentially vulnerable. It was not until the following day that leaders and managers took appropriate safeguarding action and made referrals to the relevant safeguarding agencies.

On another occasion, a member of staff did not immediately raise significant safeguarding concerns with managers or senior members of staff when they arose. This was not reported to the manager until after further concerns were noted. Once the manager was made aware, they took appropriate steps to immediately safeguard those involved, and the relevant authorities were informed without further delay.

Leaders and managers work closely with mental health professionals to support children. For one child, this has included seeking external art therapy in addition to the home's own therapeutic support.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers have made significant changes since the last inspection. However, these changes are taking time to embed, as the shortfalls noted in this report demonstrate. Despite the shortfalls, managers have more-effective oversight of the home than previously. The responsible individual is present in the home, knows the children well and has oversight of the manager's records.

Leaders and managers have not always addressed staff concerns with appropriate rigour. When staff delayed raising serious safeguarding concerns, the record relating to leaders and managers' oversight of the incident does not capture the actions that leaders and managers say have taken place. The records reinforce a message to staff that they 'handled this in the correct way' and raised the concerns 'quickly'. Although leaders and managers also stated that the further training was provided, this was not for another 10 days.

Important records in the home have not always been kept up to date. Important safety plans for one child had not been updated across some documents. This increases the potential for misunderstandings and confusion in respect of an area of particular risk.

Leaders and managers have notified Ofsted following serious incidents occurring in the home. However, the records submitted of these incidents are not always sufficiently clear.

Leaders have updated their statement of purpose, policies and procedures, and internal training.

Recent visits by an independent person have taken place in person. Leaders and managers have identified ways to strengthen this process.

The registered manager and the responsible individual have been working hard to embed the changes in the home. Staff say that the managers are available and present in the home.

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 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— 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)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))	1 December 2024
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	19 December 2024

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h))	
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that managers and staff seek medical attention in a timely way for children who are experiencing mental health crisis, or where it is suspected that a child may need physical medical attention.	19 December 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any notification of a serious event to Ofsted includes a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. In particular, the home should ensure that it is clear if the notification is in respect of an allegation against the home or someone working in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14)

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: Chelsea Bailey

Registered manager: Gabrielle Pars

Inspector

Andrea Bounden, Social Care Inspector

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