

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 and/or have difficulties managing their emotions.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

There is a Department for Education-registered school on the same site. The inspector only inspected the social care provision.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 July 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: 14 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/12/2021	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Full	Good
14/06/2018	Full	Good
25/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This inspection was brought forward to address concerns raised with Ofsted. At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. One child has recently moved out.

Children have a wide range of complex needs. Staff provide care that is well planned and responsive. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's needs and build positive relationships with children. One child said, 'The staff are great, they all make me laugh.'

The children attend the on-site school. Some children have had limited attendance since the last inspection. However, staff actively encourage children's educational engagement. Plans to support children in education include strategies based on what they respond well to. The manager works closely with the head of school to consider how to increase children's engagement. One child with a previously poor school attendance record has been attending school each day.

Staff help children with their health needs. One child has recently experienced a traumatic health issue. Staff worked with the child in a sensitive and effective way to help them to consider the options. Children access therapeutic support. While children's engagement is mixed, staff work with children to encourage them to access therapy. This contributes to children's emotional well-being.

Staff recognise children's achievements. Incentive schemes are used to help encourage and reward positive behaviour. When sanctions are used after behavioural incidents, they help children to learn from the incidents.

Staff encourage children's interests and offer them a good range of activities. One child loves cooking and takes pride in cooking for staff and other children. The child wants to work in the food industry. The staff's support and recognition of the child's talent encourages this aspiration.

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

Recently, children have presented with high levels of complex behaviour. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the risks to children and work with children to reduce these.

Some children's risk assessments are of good quality and contain strategies for staff to minimise risks. Some children have been involved in incidents of self-harm. Strategies for staff to support children at such times are clear and child-focused. This helps the staff respond to children in a caring and nurturing way.

There have been several incidents of challenging behaviour directed at the staff. Staff manage these incidents well and provide a good level of support for the child. However, one child's risk assessment has not been updated to accurately reflect the incidents. The assessment does not contain clear strategies for staff in relation to when and how to use physical interventions. While staff respond to incidents appropriately, learning is not being used to further develop strategies to help minimise children's distress.

There have been some incidents of children being reported missing from the home. The staff have responded appropriately. They try to locate children and work with their families and other professionals. When children return and there are concerns about risks, staff have responded well to these. This includes effective communication with other professionals to consider how to reduce the risks. Staff work with children to help them have a better understanding of risks.

Staff use restraint at times to keep children and themselves safe. Staff are trained in the use of restraint and generally use it as a last resort. However, the recording of one incident was unclear about the strategies used. Following restraints, managers undertake debriefs with staff. The children are spoken to about incidents, however, the conversations with children do not always include a discussion about the restraint. This means that children's views about how staff manage these situations are not always captured.

Children have made a number of allegations against staff. Managers respond effectively to these, making prompt referrals to the local authority designated officer (LADO). The LADO commented on good levels of communication with managers and the sharing of detailed information. However, one allegation was not reported to managers by the staff for three days after it had been made. This resulted in a delay in managers being aware and able to take effective action. Delays in sharing information leaves the potential for children to be at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is highly experienced and qualified to level 5. She is a visible presence in the home and this enables her to build effective relationships with staff and children.

The manager has good systems in place for monitoring the home. Monitoring systems are used to identify any shortfalls and areas for development. The manager understands the home's strengths and has plans in place to develop the service further.

Staff feel well supported by managers. Regular supervision includes consideration of how staff are working with children and meeting their needs. Staff's development is prioritised and the staff feel valued in their roles. This has helped to provide a relatively settled staff team which gives consistency to children.

Managers provide staff with a wide range of training that specifically meets the needs of children. Staff are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the model of care. However, two of the staff have not completed their level 3 diploma within timescales.

Three complaints have been made by children since the last inspection. The manager has responded to these appropriately. She has ensured they are properly looked into and that children are then provided with feedback about the concerns they have raised. This feedback is detailed and acknowledges when children's care could have been better. Good responses to complaints help ensure that children feel valued and listened to.

Staff seek to build effective relationships with children's families and other people involved in their care. Some parents and social workers spoke of good communication. One parent said that when visiting their child, they were made to feel like 'part of the family'. However, when one child was prescribed a new medication, the staff failed to share this with the child's parent and social worker. This was not in line with the child's plans and had a negative effect on staff's working relationships with the parent.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (d)) In particular, ensure that all those involved in children's care are communicated with effectively and updated about any changes.	29 August 2022
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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b)) In particular, ensure that children's risk assessments are updated in response to incidents and include information about the use of physical interventions.	29 August 2022
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— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii))	29 August 2022

In particular, ensure that staff report safeguarding concerns to managers without delay.	
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)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	31 October 2022
The registered person must ensure that— 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— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record	29 August 2022

confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v)(c))

In particular, ensure records include measures taken to avoid the restraint, and that children are spoken to about the restraint.

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

Joe Cox, Social Care Inspector

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