

SC063219

Registered provider: Children Assisted in a Real Environment (care) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to five children aged between 11 and 18 who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in July 2005. The manager registered in September 2022.

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 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: 5 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/10/2022	Full	Good
01/02/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/12/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by a consistent and committed team of staff who are passionate about helping them to reach their potential. Children enjoy spending time with staff and are at ease around them. One child told the inspector, 'The home is fair and amazing.' Another child said that they feel confident that all staff listen to them and support them. Staff take time to get to know children, earn their trust and ensure that their wishes and feelings are considered.

Children are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles. They have good bedtime and morning routines. The children are especially enthusiastic about mealtimes. Staff and children prepare and eat food together. One child told the inspector, 'I have never had a meal here that I didn't like.' The registered manager and her team have succeeded in creating a family feel to the home.

Children are registered promptly with healthcare professionals and supported to attend their appointments. Education is seen as key in helping children to make good progress. One child proudly said that they have 100% attendance at school. The registered manager understands the barriers for some children to access education. She is proactive and ensures that the children have the appropriate education provision and support. Staff plan transitions to new educational settings carefully. One teacher said, 'Staff take school seriously, and this means the child takes it seriously.'

Children engage in a wide range of activities in the home and in the community. One child was scouted by a premiership football club and plays in the under-16s team. Another child recently participated in a performance at a London theatre.

One child has been successfully supported to move on to live independently. They are in regular contact with staff and returned to the home to spend Christmas day with staff and children. The Christmas holidays were a highlight for children and staff. One child described it as their 'best Christmas' since being in care.

Staff help children to keep in touch with their families and other people who are important to them. Family time is carefully planned. Staff support visits at the home and in the community. They ensure that there is always an alternative plan in place should there be a change to the arrangements.

Staff ensure that there are meaningful discussions with children about their culture and heritage. Diversity is celebrated. This helps children to develop a positive self-image and builds their confidence.

Children are listened to. Their views and wishes are regularly sought and considered by staff. Children feel that their contributions are taken seriously. For example, one suggestion made by the children was for the home to have a brochure that includes additional information about the staff to go alongside the children's guide. The

brochure is now part of the information children receive when they arrive. One child said that they were made to feel welcome from day one.

Children decorate their bedrooms, and they are happy with how they look. However, the premises need renovation. There have been ongoing problems with a leak and stains to the ceiling of the communal living room. There are plans for the home to relocate to a new premises, which the staff and children are excited about. However, this move may take some time and it is important that action is taken to improve the living environment in the meantime.

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

Children's needs, risks, strengths and vulnerabilities are well understood. Staff develop plans that clearly detail children's risks and how best to manage them.

The team of staff work well together. This collaborative and consistent approach is apparent to the children. One child said, 'They are a good team, they have each other's back and support each other and us.' Children are clear about the expectations of behaviour in the home. Staff have not used physical intervention to manage children's behaviour since the last inspection.

Staff have a good understanding of contextual safeguarding and the risks posed to children in the community. If children are missing from the home, there is a well-coordinated response. Staff maintain regular contact with children and those in their network to encourage them to return home. Strategies to support children are specific to the individual child. The plans are regularly reviewed by the team, and the registered manager ensures that the strategies set out are put into practice.

Closed-circuit television is not used in the communal areas of the home. However, there is a camera in the office and consent is not in place. Further thought needs to be given to the purpose of its use, and the reasons should be clearly set out and shared with staff, children and placing authorities.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff and children benefit from the continuation of committed leadership. The registered manager is child focused, empathetic and committed to the children she provides care for. She knows the children well and works hard to support them and ensure that they feel cared for and valued.

Staff morale is positive. They feel supported by the registered manager. They say that she is always present and offers advice and support when needed. One member of staff said, 'The manager has been a mentor to us all and has provided us with constant support, encouragement and inspiration.'

Staff's well-being is a priority for the registered manager. There are regular team meetings as well as a monthly therapeutic meeting, which is facilitated by an in-house therapist. This provides opportunities for wider learning and reflection. Staff

have regular and effective supervision where they discuss the children's needs as well as their own development and learning.

Staff have access to training, which is mainly online. The in-house therapist has provided bespoke face-to-face training, which staff have found beneficial. Some staff have completed physical intervention training. However, some are yet to complete the training, or they need a refresher course. The leadership team has a plan in place to ensure that all team members are trained to use physical holds should this be needed for the safety of the children.

There is plan for the home to move to a new property in the coming months. Leaders and managers understand they need to plan the transition carefully with the children and keep the professional and family network fully informed of any changes.

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 may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that the use of cameras in the home is assessed and reviewed, and that consent is obtained as required.	26 February 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the environment is well maintained and homely. Any damage should be repaired promptly. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff receive training for physical intervention to ensure that they are equipped to physically intervene if required. 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.11)

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: SC063219

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Children Assisted in a Real Environment (care) Limited

Registered provider address: 144 Old Oak Road, London W3 7HF

Responsible individual: Ricky Phelan

Registered manager: Cassandra Ebanks

Inspectors

Matilda Clode, Social Care Inspector

Leanne Grant, Social Care Inspector

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