

SC063219

Registered provider: Children Assisted in a Real Environment (CARE) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to five children. In the statement of purpose, the provider states that the home provides care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager, who had been in post since February 2013, has resigned. A new manager was appointed on 14 June 2021. The new manager has not yet submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection. One of them moved out during the inspection, leaving the home with one remaining child.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 16 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 30 June to 1 July 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 17 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/04/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's experiences, progress and outcomes are varied. Some children have not stayed in the home long enough to achieve stable and secure relationships with staff. This has had a negative impact on their experience and progress.

Initial risk assessments and care plans do not sufficiently capture children's known risks and needs. Furthermore, staff do not fully understand what is required of them to meet children's needs. For example, one child does not always receive the required level of supervision to meet her needs and the expectations of the placing local authority and court. However, additional training has been arranged for staff to improve their knowledge and understanding.

Children's access to social, educational and recreational opportunities is limited. One child informed the inspector that staff need to arrange more activities for children. The newly appointed manager has identified and is working to improve this.

Children's learning progress and educational attainments are not consistently good. Although staff are ambitious for children and support and encourage them to attend and do well in their education, this could be improved.

Feedback from a family member and key professionals is positive, praising staff for their dedicated work. One professional commented, 'I have been really impressed with the level of understanding staff members have offered in their descriptions of the child, as well as the level of engagement in their relationship building with them.'

Staff support children to take pride in who they are, which helps them to develop a positive identity. Children are supported in their religious traditions, such as cooking and eating halal meat. Staff help children to enjoy their birthdays by making an effort to celebrate them.

The new manager has identified that the home needs to be more homely and has started to make some improvements. One child has been included in planning the decoration of her bedroom.

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

Although matching and impact risk assessments identify potential risks to children, staff do not always take the required action to manage and reduce risks. For example, the risk relating to the self-harm of one child was not fully considered when another child moved into the home.

Impact risk assessments about the group-living dynamics and the potential impact of children's behaviours on each other are not sufficiently considered. Consequently, negative peer influence has triggered some incidents, resulting in the police and ambulance service attending the home to support staff to manage these incidents.

Staff's lack of required skills and insufficient staffing levels has resulted in unsafe and poorly managed incidents taking place at night. However, leaders and managers have identified and taken action to address this.

Some safeguarding notifications are not sent to Ofsted in a timely manner. Additionally, Ofsted was not informed of two serious incidents as required by regulation.

Children are supported by staff and specialist services to reduce incidents of self-harmful behaviour, online exploitation and going missing from care. There are some creative key-work sessions carried out with children to help to keep them safe.

Safer recruitment practice prevents unsuitable people from working in the home. The home has successfully recruited three more permanent staff members. This will improve the consistency and continuity of care for children.

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

There have been recent changes in the leadership and management of the home due to the registered manager's resignation. A new manager has been appointed and is being supported by a manager from another children's home in the organisation. They have been working hard to make positive changes to improve children's experience, progress and safety.

Leaders and managers have not addressed the requirements and recommendations made by Ofsted at the previous assurance visit. This has had a negative impact on children's experience and progress.

Leaders and managers do not use monitoring and review systems to make improvements to the quality of care provided to children. The monthly quality assurance reports completed by the independent visitor and the home's quality of care review do not always include feedback from children, parents and staff.

Leaders and managers do not always ensure that care plans and risk assessments for children comprehensively identify their needs and risks. The home's care plan for one child does not sufficiently reflect the local authority care plan. Furthermore, additional weaknesses in records, such as information relating to sanctions, staff supervision and appraisals, and complaints and compliments do not enable leaders and managers to identify and evidence good practice. Consequently, this limits reflection and learning to improve outcomes for children.

Staff report that they feel valued and supported. They now benefit from the support of an external consultant and therapist and this helps to improve the quality of care provided to children.

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
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home; and ensure that any care that is arranged or provided for a child that— relates to the child's development (within the meaning of section 17(11) of the Children Act 1989) or health; and	24 September 2021

is not arranged or provided as part of the health service continued under section 1(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006(1), satisfies the conditions in paragraph (3). The conditions are— that the care is approved, and kept under review throughout its duration, by the placing authority; that the care meets the child’s needs; that the care is delivered by a person who— has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care; and is under the supervision of a person who is appropriately skilled and qualified to supervise that care; and that the registered person keeps the child’s general medical practitioner informed, as necessary, about the progress of the care throughout its duration. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iv)(ix)(c)(i)(ii)(d)(i)(ii) (3)(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(d))	
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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;	24 September 2021

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; 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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	
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— 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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f))	24 September 2021

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	24 September 2021
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a))	24 September 2021
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	24 September 2021

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

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) (5))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home's behaviour management policy sets out the approach to promoting positive behaviour and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in the home. These measures should be set in the context of building positive relationships with children. The behaviour management strategy should be understood and applied at all times by staff, and must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraphs 9.33 and 9.34)
- The registered person should ensure that staff work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. Specifically, the registered person should be more effective at enabling children to engage in their learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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) Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Linda Blakely

Registered manager: Natasha Esprit

Inspector

Gulcin Ardic, Social Care Inspector

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