

SC063814

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a registered charity. It provides care for up to four children aged between seven and 17 who have experienced neglect, abuse and trauma along with family and placement breakdowns.

The registered manager has been in post since December 2019.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 October 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: 19 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/10/2021	Full	Good
21/08/2019	Full	Good
18/09/2018	Full	Good
13/12/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The daily life experiences of children at this home are good. The staff have developed a culture of love, nurture and care. Children with histories of complex trauma respond well to the support and guidance from the staff.

Since the last inspection, there have been several changes with children moving out and new children moving into the home. Four children were resident at the time of the inspection. Each child has a varying degree of life experience and childhood trauma. A resilient staff team provides a consistent level of care. Staff provide emotional warmth and consistent boundaries, and this helps children to develop emotionally and form positive relationships with adults.

One child said, 'I have not lived in a children's home before. Everyone is so nice and easy to talk to. I like it here because I can talk to different people, not just one person.' A child's social worker said, 'It doesn't feel like a residential home. It's like a home. [Child's name] has settled well. Staff are great.'

Children's health needs are met in accordance with their health plans. Children are registered with primary care services and staff support children to attend their health appointments. Staff help children to manage their emotions. Simple, effective strategies create a homely and nurturing atmosphere. Children who struggle with their emotional health receive additional support from therapeutic services.

Children attend school and/or further education college. Some children have been out of education for a long time. The staff provide a creative timetable of informal learning. This ensures that children have a daily routine and structure. An education support worker, employed by the home, supports children who are struggling to reintegrate back into school. However, the manager has not gained a clear education plan from the placing authority at the point of the child's referral. This does not ensure that gaps in children's education are addressed without delay.

Children invest time in their home and enjoy their surroundings. Children help maintain the garden by painting the garden fence. Children are valued and appreciated by staff. Children personalise their bedrooms. One child has personalised another area of the home to use as a space to study. This gives children a sense of ownership of their living space and their environment.

Children working towards independence goals achieve successful outcomes. The staff support children with household tasks, such as cooking together and cleaning out the fish tank. Staff value the choices that children make about their futures. Staff liaise with professionals to ensure a smooth transition towards independence. Children who have left the home enjoy coming back to visit the home.

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

The risk management plans are detailed and clearly list children's identifiable risk factors. The staff update these plans after each incident, which helps the staff to understand the current risks for each child. The staff team also uses the in-house therapist to support children with therapeutic behaviour management strategies.

There are few incidents of children going missing from the home. When these do occur, the staff follow clear missing-from-home protocols. The staff take effective action when searching for children. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep the children safe.

The manager consults with the community police to update the local area risk assessment. The manager has a good understanding of the local risks and this helps to keep children safe.

The manager appropriately considers that all the children have the potential of being at risk of child sexual exploitation. Internet safety and exploitation through social media are recognised as concerns. Staff undertake regular mobile phone checks and take action if there are any concerns identified.

Children's meetings encourage children to talk to children about subjects that help to broaden their understanding of how to reduce risk. The fire officer spoke to children about the dangers and risks of fire starting. Children were also spoken to about 'living free from abuse' by a well-known public figure.

Children's files contain detailed records of any incidents and actions taken, including liaison with police and health services. However, the staff do not always evidence the good work that they do in talking to children following incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is qualified for the role. She leads by good example and has built a foundation of nurture and care. She has a real desire to understand children's backgrounds, and this is central to children's progress. One staff member said, 'The manager is very good, and the values come top down.'

A consistent and committed staff team provides good-quality care. One staff member said, 'I find it rewarding. I enjoy coming to work. I think we can really make a difference.' Staff helped fulfil a child's wish to visit London. Another child had a trip to York. Opportunities for children to experience new places create positive childhood memories.

Team meetings are comprehensive. Children are discussed in depth, and the in-house therapist provides guidance for the staff. This helps staff to provide a planned and consistent approach to children's care.

Staff supervision sessions vary in quality, which means that staff receive inconsistent support. Some staff have not achieved their level 3 childcare qualification. Therefore, staff may not have sufficient knowledge for the role.

Staff work tirelessly to support and understand children. They take time to get to know the children personally. The staff prioritise spending time with the children and consequently do not always update children's records. Therefore some of the records do not provide a clear picture of the staff's good work with children.

The manager uses the internal monitoring system to help to understand the overall progress of children and the development of the home. The manager uses an electronic record system. However, this system is difficult to navigate and find relevant documents which can hinder the monitoring system.

The external monitoring of the home is provided by an independent visitor. The visitor does not routinely include the views of children, parents and stakeholders. This limits the scope and depth of these external monitoring visits.

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 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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have completed their induction and childcare qualification within an appropriate timeframe.	31 January 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that local authorities have a duty under section 22(3A) of the Children Act 1989 to promote the educational achievement of their looked-after children, which includes, as set out in guidance, seeking a school or other education setting that is best suited to the child's needs. Therefore, children have an identified school prior to moving into the home to avoid drift in their education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should ensure that they record evidence of good practice with children; and managers should ensure that supervision records contain suitable language. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This includes speaking to children, parents and/or carers and key stakeholders. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: SC063814

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich, Norfolk
NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Scott Olivey

Registered manager: Anne-Marie Rankin

Inspector

Kamal Bhamra, Social Care Inspector

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