

SC063895

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to four children who are experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 28 February and 1 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2022	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
04/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/04/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Trusted and secure relationships between children and adults underpin the strong foundations of this home. Staff know the children exceptionally well and listen to them intently. Staff treat children with care and dignity so that they can thrive in all that they do. Children develop a sense of permanence and belonging and describe the home as a 'family'.

Children make excellent progress from their starting points. One child received extensive support, practically and emotionally, to move on from the home. The careful and sensitive planning for this ensured that the child had the confidence to move and experience a positive goodbye. Staff went above and beyond to provide the child with everything they would need in setting up their first home. The child is a welcomed visitor to the home and has some life-long links with the adults who cared for them. This level of care and nurture supports children to reach their potential.

Staff prioritise education in the same way that a good parent would. Staff work closely with schools and monitor children's progress carefully. Children are praised for good attendance and working hard. One child who has been without a provision is being supported at home to complete independence tasks and study for a driving test. The manager has been a strong advocate for this child and has been persistent in her efforts to secure an education provision for the child.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which keep them healthy and active. Younger children attend a wealth of after-school clubs and hobbies, which provide regular opportunities for them to make friends and develop social skills. Older children enjoy greater independence by learning domestic skills and benefiting from driving lessons. One child successfully passed their driving test and, with support from the home, bought their first car. This support improves the life chances for children in care.

Children receive help to improve their health and manage lifelong conditions. Staff use research-informed practice, and the expertise of others, to access the best healthcare for children who need it. For one child, this tenacity has resulted in a swift assessment, diagnosis and treatment plan for a processing disorder. This will make an exceptional difference to the child's life moving forwards.

Partnership working is a real strength of the home. The team has developed an extensive professional network, within which its members are highly respected as care professionals. Social workers, independent reviewing officers and education professionals are unanimous in their praise for the team. The inspector was told by numerous stakeholders 'we wish more of our children could be placed here'.

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

Safeguarding is of paramount importance to everyone in this home. Children said they feel safe and learn how to be safe through extensive discussions with staff. Professionals stated that safeguarding practice is excellent. Regular communication with placing authorities and excellent record-keeping contribute to this excellent practice.

Risks to children are identified and understood from the moment they arrive. Careful matching and extensive planning ensure that any vulnerabilities are known and responded to. Safeguarding training and continuous professional development in this area ensure that staff understand a diverse range of complex risks.

Risk assessments for children are reviewed regularly. Staff have an excellent understanding of the children's needs, which contributes to this efficiency. Strategies to protect children are developed and adapted as needed. Over time, risks reduce for children which means they can enjoy a higher level of independence.

One child has been missing from the home on several occasions. The response to these incidents has been highly effective. Consistent support and encouragement to help staff understand why the child has run away prevent further incidents. Excellent key-work discussions and educating the child about the risks of such behaviour have meant that incidents significantly reduced. Consequently, children learn how to keep themselves safe.

Behaviour management is exceptional. Staff have not used physical intervention to manage complex behaviours for several years. Staff understand the underlying reasons behind behaviours, particularly the impact of childhood trauma and abuse. A staff member said, 'We know the children so well. We know what the behaviour really means, and what we need to do to help.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The leadership team comprises of a registered manager, a deputy manager and a service manager. All three individuals are ambitious for children and inspirational leaders. They provide excellent role modelling to the staff team and drive improvements forward. The culture of the home is to never be complacent and to ensure that all children reach their personal potential.

Staff hold managers in high regard. They are described as being 'open, approachable and supportive' both with work matters and those that are more personal. The inspector was told of an 'open door policy' and that managers are welcoming of staff feedback and ideas. This has contributed to high morale and dedication throughout the staff team.

Managers promote continuous professional development of all staff. Research is used to keep abreast of all sector changes and to access high-calibre and diverse

training resources. Supervision and team meetings are used effectively as opportunities to upskill staff both individually and collectively.

Managers and staff work collaboratively to ensure that children are provided with care that is consistent and offers stability. Staff have a shared sense of ownership and are clear about their own responsibilities. Children's plans and goals are routinely analysed to ensure the continual development and progress for each child.

The physical environment provides a warm and welcoming family home. It is decorated and furnished to a high standard and incorporates children's ideas. The home is large and spacious, allowing children to spend time both together and apart, inside and outside. A large, outdoor space provides lots of opportunities for fun and games.

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: SC063895

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Jack Smallman

Registered manager: Amber Miles

Inspectors

Rachael Sprigg, Social Care Inspector

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