

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.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 1 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
11/01/2022	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
04/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children are provided with a cosy homely environment which is very well presented clean and organised. Care has been taken to ensure there is no unnecessary display of information that would take away the presentation of a family home. The home is large and provides ample space for children to relax, play, socialise and have space for quiet time if they wish. There is a large, enclosed garden which is well maintained and provides plenty of space for children to play.

Children's bedrooms are personalised they have sufficient space for their personal items and storage of their clothing. Children have keys to their bedroom doors.

Children said they liked their home and bedrooms. They interacted positively and naturally with staff approaching them for hugs and general support. Managers and staff know the children well and spoke confidently about their personalities, likes, dislikes and their achievements. Staff take pride in ensuring children are provided with and family experience.

Staff use a variety of creative ways to ascertain children's wishes and feelings. This is achieved through day to day interaction alongside more focussed methods such as direct group and one to one keywork sessions. As a result children understand and contribute to their daily routines and chosen activities.

Staff are attuned to the individual need of the children and their level of needs and mood. Children are supported with their emotional and psychological needs. Individual emotional and mental health support is provided by the in-house psychotherapist and universal children's mental health services.

Children are supported to write, draw and identify what works best for them to be able to express their feelings when they are unable to verbalise this. One child said staff know how she prefers to communicate her feelings through art and is supported to do so.

Children are encouraged and supported to access and engage with their education. The manager is an excellent advocate for children and has been proactive in escalating her concerns regarding delay in a child's education needs being met. Children are supported with their health needs and staff use practical methods to support children to attend their routine appointments, engage in fun physical activities and are provided with a healthy diet. Staff provide a range of fun activities for children and offer opportunities to develop hobbies and interests.

Staff provide children a range of opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world. As a result children are helped to understand their history and identity. One child has been supported to explore part of their identity by attending a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersexed support group. This has enable the child to be more secure and confident about who they are and also build and develop friendships with their peers.

Children are supported to maintain their links with their families, friends and other significant people in their lives. Staff ensure children have framed photographs of family and significant others displayed in their bedrooms.

The manager and staff offer lifelong links for children who wish to remain in contact and offer practical and emotional support. One child went to great lengths to produce a photo album with notes of thanks for all staff as part of their goodbye when moving on from the home.

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

Children are supported by staff to understand their individual risks and vulnerabilities. This is achieved through robust risk assessment which includes the participation and contribution from children. Children are encouraged and supported following any incident to reflect and learn from risky situations. This supports children to develop their understanding of risk and build resilience.

The manager has been vigorous in her response to an unsettled period when children were engaging in risky behaviours. She ensured staff followed correct safeguarding procedures and worked in close partnership with key safeguarding agencies. Opportunities were taken with staff and children to reflect and identify any learning. When children have gone missing from home or engaged in anti-social behaviour children have been supported well using a restorative approach.

There are risk assessment and plans in place that identify children's risks and vulnerabilities. These are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure managers and staff have a clear understanding of risk. As a result staff are proactive in preventative work and support with children and key agencies.

Staff have a good understanding of the impact of bullying and discriminatory behaviours. Managers and staff have been proactive in supporting a very well to report and explore the effects this had on their self-esteem and safety in their education setting.

Staff do not use physical intervention to support children when they are unable to manage their emotions. Staff use the strong bonds they have with children to distract and de-escalate.

Children said they are able to talk to staff and feels supported to share any worries and feel listened to. They know how to complain and have access to their key professionals and other safeguarding agencies.

Staff support children to be able access the community unsupervised to see friends, this is regularly reviewed to ensure children are being provided with the opportunity to develop their independence skills in a safe way.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has very high expectations of her staff teams ability to care and support children. She knows the children very well and ensures staff are supported to care for the children in a manner the promotes excellent outcomes for children.

Staff are provided with regular and effective mandatory training alongside bespoke training to meet the specific needs of individual children. She and the deputy ensure staff are provided with regular and effective supervision and team meetings. These forums are used to discuss what is working well and also to highlight practice improvements. She is confident to challenge where required to ensure high standards are maintained for the children and the staff.

The manager is an excellent advocate for the children and ensures she is a key partner in the teams around the children. She is a strong and resilient manager who works hard to ensure children have the very best of care and protection living in a family home environment.

The manager is very ambitious for the children and the development of the home. She maintains clear oversight of the home and supports staff's development through the delegation of appropriate responsibly of key areas of responsibility e.g. children engagement in local and cultural events.

There is excellent use of research in practice and a proactive approach to identify resources to develop the care support and guidance for the children and staff development.

Staff talk highly about the manager and inform she is very approachable and open to their contributions to the continued development of the home.

There has been very positive feedback from professional, parents and staff during this inspection. The manager has ensured she seeks feedback at regular intervals from professionals and parents. There has been a successful development in seeking further the views from children about the care they receive and which staff spend the most time with them. This information is used to support her oversight and development of the home.

The manager has access and uses the one to one and group support and informed she is able to obtain ongoing support outside of the formal meetings where required.

She knows her own strengths and areas for improvement and that of her staff team.

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: Lauren Gilbey

Registered manager: Amber Miles

Inspector

Angela Duffus-Palmer, social care inspector

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