

SC067810

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to seven children with emotional and/or social difficulties. In addition to having two other homes, the company is also a registered education provider.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2017.

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 26 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 August 2021

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: 26 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/06/2019	Full	Good
05/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/07/2018	Full	Good
14/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Leaders and managers place great emphasis on helping children to move into the home. This includes considering the needs of other children already living at the home. This helps children to quickly settle in and to start to make progress physically, emotionally, socially and educationally.

Staff understand children's wishes and feelings well. Children benefit from staff's conscientious efforts to engage them in everyday decisions, including sharing their views at regular house meetings. However, the records of these meetings lack detail. This means that the hard work of staff to engage children in key decisions is not formally evident.

Managers and staff forge strong relationships with children. These relationships have played a vital part in supporting children throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff have promoted children's health and well-being despite the many restrictions. This has included ensuring that children have access to specialist help and support. One child told the inspector, 'The staff helped me when I was depressed. They got me a cuddle pillow as well. I thought this was kind and thoughtful of staff. They are always thinking of ways to help me feel better.'

Children benefit from regular, individualised and good-quality key-work sessions. Staff regularly support children in learning useful life skills. For example, children are adept at making nutritious and healthy home-cooked meals. This has helped children to recognise the progress they are making.

Staff work hard to help children to achieve academic success and to overcome barriers that can impact on their learning. For example, one child was struggling to re-engage in school due to frequently going missing from home. Staff first focused on addressing the safeguarding concerns relating to the child going missing from home. Once the child started to feel more safe and secure, staff moved on to help the child to explore potential apprenticeships and job opportunities. This bespoke work has not only improved the child's life chances but has also ensured their welfare is safeguarded.

Staff work hard to enable children to stay in touch with people who are important to them, while still having the required safeguards in place. This positive support has been instrumental in children re-establishing and maintaining safe relationships.

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

Staff focus their efforts on building positive and meaningful relationships with children. This child-centred care helps children to feel safe and know that people care about them.

Staff understand children's individual needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Staff use this informed knowledge to help children to make safe decisions. As a result, children's episodes of going missing from home and risks of exploitation significantly reduce.

Staff only use physical restraint when it is necessary to safeguard children and others. Following incidents, children receive good support which enables them to reflect on their emotions.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the home's child protection and whistle-blowing policies. When allegations are raised against a staff member, these are managed well. Consequently, children and staff are protected.

Most of the time, staff are good at reporting significant incidents to the regulator. However, one serious incident involving a knife being found in a child's bedroom was not reported. The failure to report this serious incident to the regulator has compromised external oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced and qualified registered manager and a suitably skilled and diverse staff team.

Staff are well supported and receive regular supervision. However, supervision records are not always sufficiently detailed, signed and dated. This compromises the oversight of staff's practice and development.

Staff benefit from good training and regular team meetings that focus on the needs of the children in their care. This child-centred approach promotes children's good progress.

Leaders, managers and staff have worked hard during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that the impact on children's quality of care has been kept to a minimum. For example, the manager rearranged the staff rota when children tested positive for COVID-19. This helped children to have continuity of care.

Leaders and managers actively and regularly monitor the quality of care provided to children. External monitoring of the home has improved since the monitoring visit in February 2021. This has helped leaders and managers to continue to make improvements.

Leaders and managers work exceptionally well with other agencies. An independent reviewing officer told the inspector, 'The manager has been to every single meeting

for the child and knows the child well. There is a consistent plan between the social worker, home and reviewing officer.' This demonstrates to children that staff and the manager are committed to their well-being.

Leaders and managers have invested in extensive redecoration of the home internally and have plans to decorate the external areas of the home. As a result, children feel that their home is comfortable and welcoming.

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 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))	20 September 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. Case records must be signed and dated by the author of each entry. Specifically, this relates to ensuring that all records that capture children's views, such as children's house meetings, are accurately and comprehensively recorded. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions is kept and that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record. Specifically, this relates to ensuring that both the supervisor and the supervisee have a copy of the record of supervision and that both have signed and dated it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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: SC067810

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Michelle Nicholson

Inspector

Jayshree Pillay, Social Care Inspector

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