

SC379357

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It offers short-term, long-term and emergency placements. The home is part of a large private children's care organisation.

Inspection date: 12 March 2018

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 19 July 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

The home was not occupied between November 2017 and January 2018. Two new children are now in placement and have transferred from another home from within the organisation. The children know the staff because the staff were working with the children at their previous home. Positive relationships have already been established. Transitions for both of the children were well managed and gradual. Both children said that they like living at the home. They were well prepared, as they were able to visit the home before moving in.

The registered manager has met all of the recommendations and requirements made at the last inspection.

The children currently in placement do not go missing from the home. There were

incidents of the children who were previously living at the home going missing. The records of these incidents are clear and comprehensive. The staff make attempts to find the children and keep in contact with them. The missing-from-home protocol is followed, and this helps to keep the children safe and ensure that they return as soon as possible.

There have been no physical interventions for several months. This reflects the stability at the home currently. Any areas of conflict are well managed and addressed by the staff in a timely way. The staff help the children to manage their emotions and feelings in a safe way. The staff are helping the children to build positive relationships with each other; consequently, the children are learning how to communicate effectively.

The staff use incentives to encourage the children to progress and reach their goals. The children are rewarded for positive behaviour, and negative consequences are used when required. The manager has good oversight of these consequences, ensuring that they are proportionate and consistent. This proportionate behaviour management helps the children to make good choices about their behaviour in and outside the home.

The staff meet the children's health needs effectively, making sure that they attend all of their health appointments. The staff encourage the children to try a variety of healthy food, and they support one child with his specific health needs on a daily basis. This child's health plan is clear and robust. The staff follow his plan well, making sure that he has everything that he needs to progress and develop.

The staff enable the children to be themselves at the home by promoting the children's individual interests and spending time getting to know them. The staff support the children to develop and be happy with their identity, focusing on their strengths. This support helps the children to build their confidence and self-esteem.

Placement plans are comprehensive, up to date and reflect the needs of the children. The staff formulate clear risk assessments to identify potential risks and how these will be minimised. All aspects of the children's needs are identified and reviewed on a regular basis.

Children engage in a range of activities. The staff are proactive at seeking links with youth clubs and local football teams for the children. This helps the children to feel part of the local community and develops their individual interests.

The children are relatively new to the home but are making progress. This is recognised by their parents and the professionals working with them. A professional said, 'The home is doing really well with my child. The home has a lovely friendly atmosphere and I can see that the staff are really invested in the children. They have been absolutely spot on in supporting my child and he is making progress.'

The staff listen to the views of the children. There are regular house meetings and the staff engage in regular direct work with the children. The children said that they can talk to the staff and that they would let the staff know if they are not happy. The children feel safe and comfortable at the home and are nurtured.

The staff work very well together. They are well established, experienced and skilled. The staff said that they feel supported by their manager and communicate effectively with each other. The team has adapted well to recent changes, continuing to prioritise the needs of the children and ensuring that staff practice is child-centred at all times.

The external reporting is effective and identifies tasks and actions. The internal monitoring report, which was seen during the inspection in its draft form, is evaluative and reflects the changes and the progress made over recent months.

Communication with parents is effective. However, this could be further improved for one child who has extensive contact with his family on a regular basis. The lack of regular detailed reports does not fully support this child's experiences.

The home is undergoing internal decoration and there are significant plans in place to improve the kitchen. The external front gates were not secured at the time of the inspection. This does not support the physical security of the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/07/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/11/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/05/2016	Full	Requires improvement
23/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
This is with particular regard to ensuring that the external front gates are properly secured.
- The registered person has a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons which may include services and individuals (including parents). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52,

paragraph 10.3)

This is with particular regard to ensuring that there is effective communication with all parents.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: SC379357

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Castle Homes Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Michelle Smith

Registered manager: Michelle Batchelor

Inspector

Debbie Young, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018