

SC390156

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been in post since November 2019 and is not yet registered with Ofsted.

Visit dates: 28 to 29 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 10 December 2019

Previous inspection judgement: good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Staff and children enjoy strong and trusting relationships. Children speak positively about the care they receive from staff. Staff know the children well and are confident in their ability to meet children's individual needs.

Staff support children to keep in touch with family and those who are important to them. During the recent COVID-19 restrictions, staff supported children to use technology to make contact with family and friends. This enabled the children to feel that staff understood their emotional needs.

Children's views are understood and considered. They are involved in planning for their future and consulted in relation to the management of risks and behaviours. There are many methods and tools used to find out about children's wishes and feelings, including one-to-one meetings and regular house meetings.

Staff understand and respond to children's needs. Partner agencies commented on the progress a child has made in many areas of their life, including improvement in their physical and emotional health. This was particularly clear during the COVID-19 restrictions, where staff supported children to take regular walks and bicycle rides while also keeping to a healthy diet.

A committed staff team supports children's educational needs. Children accessed education online during the COVID-19 restrictions and staff were present to support them. One child commented positively about the help that they received from staff to achieve their daily targets, which included social and life skills activities. A clear process was in place to reintroduce attendance at school and this has been very successful.

The home is welcoming in terms of staff and children. However, the communal spaces need to have a homelier feel as they are markedly different from the high standard of decor in children's rooms. There are plans in place to achieve improvements to communal areas, although these are not yet fully implemented.

The safety of children

Staff understand how to manage risk and keep children safe. They have a good understanding of the protocol where a child goes missing and respond as needed. The positive relationship between staff and children, and the understanding of risk, have enabled a reduction in the number of incidents of children going missing from the home.

Staff receive training to manage challenging situations. They feel confident in using this training to manage effectively the behaviours that children might display. Staff also support each other and work together to support children who push boundaries.

Staff understand the importance of consistency when promoting behaviour, which contributes to a feeling of well-being and security for children.

Staff understand the potential impact of abuse and neglect and respond appropriately. They are aware of the trauma that some children have experienced and are therefore alert to how this can affect mood and outlook. Regular and consistent one-to-one meetings help to create a talking space for children.

Children say that they have good relationships with staff. They trust them and say that they feel safe.

Leaders and managers

The manager is not yet registered with Ofsted. There is a new but skilled staff team in place. There has been improvement in the regularity of supervision. Staff receive reflective supervision from the manager and deputy manager. Staff understand the importance of supervision and are involved in the creation of action plans and tasks.

The independent visitor continued to conduct virtual visits throughout the COVID-19 restriction period. A new visitor is now in place following his leaving at short notice. This meant that a visit did not happen in July 2020. These visits however, take into consideration the wishes and feelings of children, and the manager is responsive to any recommendations made by the visitor.

The manager uses findings from monitoring to improve the quality of care and the experiences of children. However, the regulator has not received an internal monitoring report in the past six months. Similarly, the statement of purpose was reviewed in July 2020 but has not been supplied to the regulator as required.

Staff receive training that is consistent and meets their developmental needs. Subsequently this contributes to an understanding of the individual needs of each child.

Clear plans were in place to meet children's needs upon the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. For example, plans around return to education are of a good standard and support positive outcomes for children. Staff work collaboratively to give children consistency and stability. Staff in turn say that they feel well supported by management.

Leaders and managers have responded effectively to the requirements made at the home's last inspection. However, one recommendation remains in place as a result of this visit.

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— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (4)(a))	31/10/2020
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	31/10/2020

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
In particular, to bring the communal areas of the home in line with the high standards of decor in the children's personal bedrooms.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC390156

Registered provider: Pilgrims Corner Limited

Registered provider address: 185 Sea Street, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 8JY

Responsible individual: Sarah Norman

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

Mark Newington, 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 children looked after, 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 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 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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020