

SC411616

Registered provider: Calcot Services For Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. A therapeutic approach is taken in working with children and young people, with the aim of enabling them to return to their family homes, to alternative family placements or to move on to independent living.

The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2018.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 September 2018

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: 5 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Full	Good
13/06/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
Review of premises The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2)) This is with reference to the specific risk posed by gangs in the local area.	30/11/2018

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure the registered person oversees the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make good progress in the home and are happy. One young person commented, 'I am so lucky to live here.' Staff instil confidence, resilience and a real sense of aspiration for the future of young people, and young people thrive.

Each young person engages well in education. One teacher described one young person as a 'ray of sunshine in the class.' Another young person recently chose to cut short the contact she was having with her family to ensure that she attended a school induction day.

Staff celebrate progress and achievement. Young people receive formal accreditation for achieving independence tasks, such as preparing a meal or budgeting. This supports positive behaviours and raised self-esteem.

Staff provide young people with good levels of consultation. Care plans evidence young people's views on issues, such as the level of contact they have with their parents and friends. Young people obtain the skills to articulate their views productively to their allocated social workers.

Young people develop their interests and learn new means of expression. One young person recently won a local talent show with her impressive singing ability and professionally produced a song summarising her experience of the care system. Local authorities use this song as training material for new social workers.

Young people gain a strong sense of themselves and the wider community. They recently raised money for a local charity for homeless people via a bake sale. One young person is a member of the 'Calcot Council' and recently petitioned the Prime Minister over delays experienced by young people in care receiving national insurance numbers.

Young people reported that behavioural management is consistent in the home. Expectations on important issues, such as internet use, are clear and understood. Staff use their relationships with young people to intervene quickly when behaviours escalate. When poor behaviours occur, young people learn to apologise to staff and, where appropriate, repair damage to the home.

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

Young people use close and trusting relationships with staff to feel safe and secure. They learn to accept hugs and embraces where before this was not possible. Young people talk to staff when they are upset and staff respond with compassion and take the necessary protective action when required.

Staff advocate effectively for young people. Recently, staff helped to encourage an

employer to allow a young person to enjoy a full one-hour lunch break on her Saturday job. In addition, staff successfully involved the children's commissioner to challenge a care planning decision from a local authority. This further promotes trusting relationships in the home.

Good risk assessments evidence the positive progress achieved by young people. Assessments are reviewed regularly and reflect the input of important professionals, such as teachers. A recent risk assessment evidences the progress achieved by one young person in moving from medium- to low-risk of child sexual exploitation.

Safeguarding is strong and inventive in the home. Young people use a coded phrase communicated to staff over the telephone when they feel in danger in the community. Local police commented on the reduced number of call-outs to the home and good levels of information sharing. Community support officers visit the home to build relationships with young people, who engage well.

Young people reduce their risk-taking behaviour, such as running away from the home. Young people earn trust and extra time away with friends and family through good behaviours. Young people move from supervised contact to safe, unsupervised overnight contact with friends and family. This supports stability and allows young people to see the benefit of positive behaviour.

When young people run away from the home, staff use individualised risk assessments and their knowledge of young people's associates to respond effectively. However, at present independent return to care interviews are not occurring on a consistent basis, limiting an important source of support to young people at a vulnerable time.

Staff receive good levels of training that develop their understanding of young people's behaviour. Staff are reflective, inventive and proactive. One young person enjoys a box of fruit 'smellies' to support her management of cravings for junk food, and staff recently purchased a portable phone charger to support young people when they are out of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed, passionate and child-centred. She has worked in the home since June 2010 and moved from the position of deputy manager. Staff and young people have a high level of respect for her and remain excited by her plans for the home. The deputy manager left the home in September 2018; a senior residential worker currently supports the registered manager.

Staff morale is positive in the home. Young people benefit from being cared for by a small and consistent staff team; there is no use of agency staff. Staff reflected on the good levels of management support and supervision that they receive. One staff member informed the inspector, 'They build me up in the home, and I am really appreciated and motivated.'

The staff team reflects the strong sense of community in the home. Staff communicate well among themselves and support colleagues by offering guidance when they are struggling.

Managers remain focused on service improvements and have ensured that the home has met all of the requirements and recommendations of the last inspection. However, the most recent management monitoring report does not fully represent the feedback of young people. This therefore limits the effectiveness of monitoring.

Case files and case notes show strong evidence of management oversight. Managers' knowledge of the needs of young people supports good service development. For example, managers have commissioned a programme of training for staff on eating disorders in order to support young people who may have problems in this area.

The admissions process is good in the home and managers have drawn lessons from the experiences and lessons of previous admissions. A full, written risk assessment, alongside young people receiving a good introduction to the home, supports each planned admission. When placements are not progressing well, managers act quickly, addressing issues with allocated social workers and end placements when necessary. This ensures the stability of the home and the ongoing progress of young people.

Managers maintain a safe and warm family-style environment, which is a source of pride for staff and young people. All of the necessary risk assessments are complete, although the risk assessment of the local area requires more information on the risk posed by gangs in the local area.

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.

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: SC411616

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Calcot Services For Children Limited

Registered provider address: 8 Brewery Court, Theale, Reading, Berkshire RG7 5AJ

Responsible individual: Harvinder Singh

Registered manager: Karen Hatch

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

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