

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. It is registered to accommodate a maximum of three young people who may have emotional and/or 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.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 December 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The staff team is child-centred in their approach to caring for the children.
- Staff recognise the importance of relationship-based practice.

- The home manager is committed and focused in her leadership of the team.
- The senior leadership team provides effective support to the home.
- Staff are provided with good training that helps them to support children well.
- Children live in a modern, comfortable and homely environment.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Develop staff understanding of their role in sharing safeguarding concerns with the local authority who are responsible for investigating these concerns.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2017	Full	Good
13/06/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Outstanding

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
12: The protection of children standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered provider to ensure – (a) that staff – (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. Specifically, ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in sharing safeguarding concerns with the local authority who are responsible for investigating these concerns.	31/01/2018

Recommendations

- The children's guide should help children to understand how to make a complaint in line with the home's complaints procedure. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15) In particular, staff should escalate concerns where there is a delay in full-time education being provided to them.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are child-centred in their practice and apply the learning from training in their work with children. Staff talk enthusiastically about the children and their commitment to

supporting the children to reach their potential is evident. The work that staff do with the children focuses on known risks and how to help children to build their emotional resilience; when required, they are supported to access appropriate specialist mental health support in a timely way. Medication is safely stored and effective recording systems are in place to provide an audit trail for prescribed and non-prescribed medication.

The home has developed its recording systems by implementing the ideas of one staff member within the home. Progress in the direct work undertaken with children is now closely tracked in relation to their individual identified support needs. Children have access to their individual records, with the support of their key worker.

Staff understand the importance of children's education and work well with schools to help children to access their learning. Staff have supported one child to gradually return to school on a full-time basis. Another child is being supported by staff to return to school full time but this has been delayed and managers have not used all opportunities to challenge this. Staff provide informal learning for one child, alongside a school and one-to-one tuition in the home. Children value their education and this reflects the culture set within the home.

Children have developed positive attachments to their carers and this has helped them to share difficult feelings and ask for support when they need it. Children know that staff care about them. Staff support children to express how they are feeling, which means that they have changed the way they cope with these difficult feelings. Staff work effectively with health professionals in meeting the children's health needs and they promote healthy eating within the home; children are involved in the planning of meals. Children are supported to access specialist mental health support and there is effective multi-agency working in place which promotes children's emotional well-being.

Staff respect and listen to the children's views. They have also supported children to access independent advocacy services. This has helped children to participate more fully in decisions affecting their lives. Staff gain children's views through their day-to-day interactions with them. The use of sanctions and physical intervention is infrequent and reflects the positive approach to supporting children to manage their behaviour. Physical intervention is used by staff only if needed to keep a child safe.

Staff support children to participate in activities that reflect their individual interests, promote their identity and express their creativity. The organisation's children's council continues to provide opportunities for the children to engage in wider issues affecting children in care and this is supported by staff; one child has contributed directly to the work of the council. Staff support children's individual cultural identity and help involve children in cultural evenings and develop their understanding of different religious festivals throughout the year.

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

Staff work well with external agencies to support children, including working together

well with the local police. Staff provide a good level of support to meet the varying needs of the children and they are proactive in anticipating the children's individual needs. Overall, children feel safe in the home and staff help children to learn how to keep themselves safe when they are away from the home. This is particularly important, due to some of the behaviours that children have presented when they arrive at the home, which have meant that they have not felt safe before. Through the relationships that the staff develop with them, children can begin to develop trust and then feel able to share their worries; this has reduced the frequency of behaviours such as running away from the home.

Staff fully assess risks and put strategies in place that help reduce these for each child. Placement plans detail each child's needs and provide a clear plan that links directly to their risk assessment. There is a positive support plan in place for each child. Key-worker sessions focus on areas of support identified within the child's placement plan and the new assessment tool helps staff to track the progress of individual goals agreed with children. This systematic work is a particular strength of the home.

Safer recruitment practice is also a strength of the organisation, including both staff and external therapists working with children. Managers provide reflective supervision that is comprehensive in the areas covered and includes a clear focus on both the needs of the children and the individual staff member. The home's management team supports staff effectively, through the regular supervision provided, both individually and as a group.

The home shares safeguarding concerns with relevant agencies. Staff record and report allegations, relating to known adults outside of the home, to the local authority and police in a timely manner. The home has undertaken return home interviews, as requested by the local authority, where children have been missing from care. On occasion, interviews have inappropriately veered into safeguarding investigations. Staff do also share safeguarding concerns with the local authority that is responsible for investigating these concerns.

The home's management and leadership team ensured a timely and effective response to practice issues identified in respect of one staff member, with a fair outcome in line with the organisation's disciplinary procedures. The staff member was provided with good support from their supervisor that included more regular supervision being provided and a plan to help the staff member's learning. From this, the staff member then had the skills and confidence to put their learning into practice and reflect on their own professional development needs.

Managers and leaders recognised when they were no longer able to meet the needs of a young person and supported a planned transition to a new placement; this was done in order to help reduce the risks for the young person which were prevalent in the local area.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There are high expectations and aspirations for all of the children in the home, which the

manager communicates through her leadership and interactions with the staff and children. The care provided to the children is consistent with the statement of purpose for the home; children are able to see how the staff have helped them to manage their feelings better. The home's therapeutic approach supports the children in overcoming previous difficult experiences and helps them to develop their emotional resilience. Some children talk about the attachments they have made to their carers at this home.

The registered manager has a clear understanding of the children's individual needs and identified risks and appropriate plans are in place to meet needs and manage risks. She also shows a real commitment to the welfare of staff, resulting in a supportive and cohesive staff team. The registered manager ensures that children's needs are supported within a multidisciplinary approach; she works effectively with all agencies in order to achieve this.

Training and development are a priority for the home's manager, with each staff member being provided with an individual training and development plan. Staff are enthusiastic about their learning and this reflects the culture set by the registered manager. Staff talk positively about their role in the home and feel supported within the team. Staff feel able to raise any concerns they may have about the home and know how to do this.

The registered manager provides new staff with an in-depth induction programme before they then complete a level 3 qualification. Individual and group supervision is provided for all staff and this has contributed to the positive staff retention as recommended in the last inspection.

The organisation's senior leadership has ensured that there is a clear plan in place for transition arrangements, in respect of a planned change to who is registered to manage the home, with children fully informed of the plan. The current manager is mentoring the new deputy manager to ensure a smooth transfer of the roles and responsibilities in the near future. This will provide continuity of care for the children and stability for the staff team following this change.

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: Haines Watts, 87 Castle Street, Reading RG1 7SN

Responsible individual: Harvinder Singh

Registered manager: Cassandra Stribbling, Karen Hatch

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, social care inspector

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