

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 up to 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 home, to alternative family placements or to move on to independent living.

The Registered Manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2018.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 4 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/09/2018	Full	Good
05/12/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Full	Good
13/06/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: Outstanding

Children thrive in this home. They make clear and consistent progress, and children benefit from a staff team committed to children's continued development. Children experience individualised care that focuses on meeting all their needs. Clear assessments from the outset create an environment where children's needs are known and consistently met. One child said, 'If I needed anything they helped me... personally I think they deserve an outstanding.'

Children develop strong and trusting relationships with staff who know them well. Children have dedicated staff to work with them while also benefiting from a wider staff group who care for them in a manner consistent with the therapeutic ethos of the organisation.

Pet therapy is used in the home and children respond positively to the house dog. There is a recognition of the benefits that caring for an animal can bring and the impact of this is clear. Children are protective of the house dog. They learn to heal emotionally through their daily interactions, helping them to learn to trust and care for others.

Staff promote education. Children are supported to access school and educational input. When a child has no school provision, they immediately receive high-quality tuition within the home until a suitable school is found. Children have a high level of school attendance, ably supported by a skilled and dedicated staff team. One child achieved GCSEs, is currently at college and aims to join the police service. Because of the strong commitment to education, children feel able to plan for their future.

Children can express their views and wishes. They are supported by a staff team whose members show their understanding and commitment to this. Children are consulted in many ways, including through house meetings. Job applicants must complete a questionnaire created by the children. Children are involved in the 'Calcot Council', where they can share their views about the care they receive and make suggestions for change.

Children are encouraged to have their own interests and to interact with the local community. Children have joined Scouts, and attend a tennis club and access the local swimming pool. Two children have submitted outstanding entries to the Coram Voice writing competition, with the theme of 'Dreams'.

Staff understand the importance of children's time with their family and those important to them. Children are supported to have family time safely. Staff, with agreement from the child, also call part way through family time to ensure that they are happy and feel safe. This helps children to feel understood and cared for by staff, with whom they have developed trusting relationships.

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

Staff have a thorough knowledge of how to keep children safe. Children have clear and detailed risk assessments that are regularly reviewed and updated. When initially placed, children are assessed over 28 days. Their needs are identified, and appropriate plans made to ensure their safety. Positive support plans help staff to work with any behaviour, and children feel increasingly safe.

Episodes of children going missing from the home have decreased significantly. Excellent protocols are in place to ensure children's safe return should they go missing. Staff search relentlessly for children and are consistent in trying to make contact. One child has been given a portable phone charger to ensure that she is always able to make contact. There is significant joint working with local agencies, including the police. Children have opportunities to discuss their reasons for being absent, and staff are diligent in requesting return home interviews from all placing authorities.

The need for physical intervention has decreased. One child has been supported to regulate their emotions and talk about how they are feeling, and this has led to a remarkable reduction in physical intervention. Staff are trained to use a range of techniques to de-escalate situations and staff understand each child well enough to know which technique will work, leading to children feeling helped and protected. All interventions are recorded, and children are always given the opportunity to give their views.

Staff receive regular, high-quality training. Staff are skilled and knowledgeable regarding processes for reporting concerns about a child. Since the last inspection, the focus has been on whistle-blowing and there is clear evidence of significant reading, reflection and discussion.

Clear and consistent boundaries mean that children live in an environment that contributes to their feeling of well-being and security. There are processes in place to ensure their safety online. The computer is in the family room, where use can be checked. There are stringent protections installed. The wi-fi is time-limited and requests for added time can be granted at the discretion of the manager. Children with mobile phones freely give access to staff to check usage. This shows their growing understanding and trust of the staff that care for them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: Outstanding

This home is managed by a passionate and committed manager. She is energetic and dynamic and has high expectations of staff and children. She models excellent practice, and feedback about her management style has been exceptional. She is inspirational, and one young person who recently moved on to independence described her as 'great'. Staff show a high level of respect for her.

The manager provides an environment where staff can develop and grow. Staff receive regular, consistent and reflective supervision. They receive annual appraisals of their practice and are supported to meet agreed goals and targets. The manager ensures that their continuing professional development consistently meets individual and organisational needs, leading to a staff team confident in delivering the best possible care to all children in the home.

This manager is highly ambitious for children and there is clear evidence of the impact that she has made on their lives. One child acknowledges that the support she received from the manager and staff team has helped her achieve her ambitions.

The manager has excellent processes in place to check and track the progress of children. All children have aims and objectives, and these are reviewed each month. Direct work sessions address these, and when an objective is achieved it is celebrated, and a new one identified. Children are discussed regularly, and staff are encouraged to find new and diverse activities that children can access to help broaden their horizons. Children are supported to be physically, mentally and socially active.

The manager has excellent working relationships with partner agencies and schools. She has worked tirelessly to find a suitable school for the newest child in the home and has personally visited the school to ensure that it is suitable. For example, one social worker said, 'They look at things from the child's perspective.'

Leaders and managers work effectively with a wide range of local partners to ensure that information about the safety of the area is well known and shared. A detailed, and well-thought-out location assessment has been shared with the police, who have commented on its content.

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: 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

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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