

SC412296

Registered provider: Springfield Road Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children. Its statement of purpose states that the home supports children whose behaviour has become a danger to themselves and to others, and who require intensive support from carers.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 20 March 2019.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 2 December 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 21 April to 22 April 2021

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	good
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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: 25 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2019	Full	Good
26/07/2018	Full	Good
29/06/2017	Full	Good
04/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff provide children with excellent levels of support and care. This care is founded in highly effective relationships of trust with children.

Children make superb progress from some challenging starting points. One child, who was previously going missing from home frequently, absent from education and placing himself at high risk, is now doing well. He has formed positive friendships in the local community and is enrolled in education and working towards his future career aspirations. Staff remain aware that he is vulnerable to risk and take effective steps to support him to keep himself safe.

Children have been supported to reduce and eventually eliminate the need for medication to manage their behaviour. Children who have previously been out of education for significant periods have been reintroduced to mainstream education settings and make great progress.

Staff form effective professional relationships with external partners. They work closely with police, youth offending professionals, health services and placing authorities. Staff advocate strongly for children with external partners to ensure the best outcomes. Staff are prepared to challenge placing authorities' decisions when they feel they are not in the best interests of children.

Staff support children to improve relationships with families and carers where possible. Staff have helped children to maintain communication with families throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period. They work inclusively with families to ensure that family time is positive. They support children sensitively if time with family members may raise emotional issues or challenges.

The home has a well-developed model of care based on systemic family therapy principles. Staff recognise that their everyday care and support for children are vital parts of the therapeutic model. Staff see their relationships with children as key building blocks towards progress. Children and staff share high-quality relationships that are filled with warmth and humour.

Children speak confidently about their wishes and needs. They clearly feel valued. Leaders recognise that there is room for development in creating innovative ways of gathering children's views.

Staff are reflective and driven to improve standards of care and support. This includes reflecting on, and eliminating, elements of care that may appear institutional. Staff ensure that practice in the home reflects the needs of individual children.

Children benefit from a well-maintained and welcoming home. The large outdoor areas provide access to play and shared communal experiences. The home is next to a large public park where children can access community sports clubs and recreation. This promotes a positive sense of belonging with the local area.

Staff have open conversations with children about their future plans. They listen carefully to their wishes and advocate effectively for them to ensure that outcomes match children's aspirations.

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

Staff have a well-developed understanding of the risks faced by children in their care. Staff keep up to date with changes in the local community that could impact on the welfare of children. Staff training is regularly updated to ensure that staff can meet the specific needs of children at the home.

Risk assessments are routinely updated following incidents in the home. Children have consistently reduced instances of going missing from care when placed at the home.

Excellent partnerships with police community liaison officers ensure that children are safeguarded both in and out of the home.

Staff have a well-developed understanding of the impact of trauma on children and how this may manifest in their actions and behaviours. This helps staff to develop effective strategies to support children to minimise their risk-taking behaviours.

Relationships between the children at the home are natural and sibling like. Bullying is not accepted, and any inappropriate social interactions are dealt with swiftly.

Staff use a lot of humour and playfulness to highlight inappropriate conduct between peers at the home. Staff work patiently and creatively to minimise disruptive behaviour. Incidents are very infrequent and short in duration. Staff use appropriate and proportionate restorative actions to support children to understand how to behave well.

Safeguarding incidents are infrequent but when required staff take all necessary actions to safeguard children. Staff recognise their place in wider safeguarding networks around the child.

Following the full inspection, a serious safeguarding notification was received by Ofsted. A decision was made to return to the home for a focused visit to gather additional evidence in relation to the reported incident. The inspector is reassured that all appropriate actions have been taken by managers and staff to safeguard children effectively at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The responsible individual and registered manager have a clear vision for the model of care that they want staff to adopt. They role model this well to staff at all times. Leaders share an exciting vision for enhancing the personal development and life chances of children in their care. This has enabled them to deliver consistently high outcomes for children despite some very complex and challenging starting points.

The professional experience of the responsible individual in delivering systemic therapy underpins her whole team's practice. Staff talk confidently about their model of care and how they feel this impacts on children and their outcomes.

Leaders talk proudly of their achievements with children. Excellent progress in education, behaviour management and improved life chances is evident. Children are learning about how to live in a loving, respectful environment. They discover what positive relationships look like and grow in confidence and self-esteem.

Systems are in place for goal setting and monitoring the progress of children. However, children are not always at the heart of this process. As a result, some children do not have personal ownership of their goals, targets and progress monitoring.

Staff praise the support of managers and hold the leadership team in high regard. Staff retention is high. Staff supervision is frequent. While the quality of this supervision is generally high, supervision does not always demonstrate a focus on professional growth and development. Supervision sessions do not always link goals and targets set at a staff member's appraisal within the regular supervision sessions. This is a missed opportunity to consistently track personal progress and professional development.

Leaders and managers know their service well and share a constant desire to push the quality of care forward and create innovative practice. Leaders recognise the limitations of being a single home provider. They ensure that they involve themselves in external professional networks to learn about developments in childcare practice and share their own best practice examples.

Leaders have produced a clear statement of purpose that describes their philosophy and intent. The care and support for children in the home deliver on those promises.

Leaders work hard to maintain effective working relationships with external partners. Their passion and commitment to children is described as 'motivating' and 'inspirational' by professionals.

Equality and diversity practices are excellent. Children and staff regularly discuss world news. For example, staff have closely followed all recent developments in relation to 'Black Lives Matter' and they discuss the implications and meaning with children. This has enhanced children's understanding of the issues and the importance of inclusion.

Children are listened to and their views are highly valued. Leaders are able to show several ways in which children's wishes have directly led to enhancements around the home and adaptations to staff practice.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that progress made by children is recorded and measured. In particular, they should develop strategies for monitoring and evidencing progress effectively for children, and place children at the heart of this process. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 38, 8.4)
- The registered person should ensure that there are clearer links between annual appraisals and supervision that recognise the important role they play in the continuous professional development of staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. In particular, when current methods for obtaining children's views are not delivering the desired results, they should seek out new and innovative ways of placing the child's voice at the centre of the day-to-day decision-making in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, 4.11)

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: SC412296

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Springfield Road Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 5 Cornfield Terrace, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 4NN

Responsible individual: Paula Jarrett

Registered manager: Emma Martin

Inspector

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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