

SC454294

Registered provider: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to eight children who may have social and emotional difficulties. There were five children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since March 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 December 2024

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: 12 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2024	Full	Good
17/05/2022	Full	Good
13/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children are proud of their home. The house is homely and maintained to a high standard. The children choose how their bedrooms are decorated. These reflect their likes and individuality. The staff work with the children and include them in any decisions around changes or improvements. For example, a 'cosy cabin ideas workshop' helped the children to generate a plan for an additional outside space.

Children have plentiful opportunities to have their voices, wishes and feelings heard. Staff provide structured and imaginative ways for children to express their views. Children feel valued and listened to. Consequently, they are highly engaged. The 'grumbles' box and any concerns are discussed during children's meetings. A Christmas tradition suggestions jar has been introduced to support children to include their own traditions into this year's celebrations. This gives children a greater sense of belonging.

Staff support the children to learn about other cultures and religions. Staff are enthusiastic about this and provide varied experiences both in the home and in the local community. The children recently attended a Diwali festival in a nearby town. This complemented the home-based activities, which included experimenting with henna tattoos and trying cultural dishes. Staff support the children to learn more about their individual culture and heritage.

Staff ensure that the children's health needs are very well met. The manager ensures that staff receive specialist external training in response to children's specific health needs. Staff have spoken to a nutritionist to help them to develop an increased awareness of nutrition and eating disorders. As a result, they have been able to offer particularly well-informed support to children. This has significantly improved children's health and well-being.

The staff motivate the children and have high expectations for them. They ensure that the children attend school on a full-time basis and have high levels of attendance. They help the children to make significant progress with their learning. The staff support the children to develop entrepreneurial and age-appropriate skills for adulthood. They celebrate and support children's individual creativity, strengths and talents. One child produced a business plan, secured a business loan from the manager, and set up a car wash enterprise for home and school staff. The child felt a real sense of achievement when the loan was repaid and they began to accrue profit.

The staff support and encourage the children to have fun. The children access a range of external clubs and activities. The children and staff also enjoyed a summer holiday.

The staff support the children to maintain relationships with those who are important to them. Consistent staff take the children to see their families. This helps positive and

trusting relationships with families to informally develop. The staff also support the children to develop and maintain positive friendships both inside and outside the home.

Children are making good progress because of the excellent support of the staff. One child's social worker said that their child 'has come on leaps and bounds' and that 'the transformation is amazing'. Another child's social worker said that their child has done 'amazingly well'. The child is now able to verbalise their feelings and there has been a significant reduction in incidents. They described them as 'a completely different child'.

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

Safeguarding incidents are few and there have been no allegations or complaints. Children say that they feel safe.

Staff know and respond to any presenting risks quickly. When safeguarding issues occur, these are well managed and staff quickly ensure that children are kept safe. External professionals are appropriately informed and consulted. Clear records of any concerns and actions taken are maintained.

Staff develop positive, trusting relationships with the children. The staff are competent, responsive and accessible. Children feel able to talk to them when they find it difficult to manage their feelings and emotions. One child's social worker said that their child has formed 'several secure and trusting relationships with the staff'. Staff use their knowledge of the children to identify and reduce the potential of incidents occurring. They skilfully use de-escalation and distraction techniques to calm situations.

Children rarely go missing. Staff have worked with one child to significantly reduce the number of times that they go missing and the associated risks. When children do go missing, staff respond in a child-centred way to ensure that the children are swiftly found and return home safely. Staff regularly talk with children to support them to understand potential risks and learn how to better keep themselves safe.

Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort to keep children safe. Conversations take place with any staff and children involved to explore the situation and their feelings. Children are also encouraged to speak to their social workers and have access to advocacy support. Any use of physical intervention is well documented and monitored.

Children are well educated about online risks and learn how to manage these safely and independently. The staff support the children to develop improved internet safety awareness and have a safe online presence through an in-house programme of internet safety steps. Staff track and regularly review the children's progress.

Staff are guided by comprehensive individual risk assessments for children. On occasion, there are delays in the review of these risk assessments following incidents. Consequently, staff may not have the most up-to-date information about risk and how best to respond. However, the risk is mitigated as staff know the children well.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and deputy are highly active and present in the home. They work closely together to ensure that their aspirations and vision for the home are shared with staff. The manager maintains excellent oversight of the service and has a thorough understanding of each of the children. The children receive care from consistent and knowledgeable staff.

Staff feel very well supported. They describe a visible and approachable management team. Understanding and respect for equality and diversity are threaded throughout the service. Staff describe the manager as 'compassionate' and say that the senior leadership team show 'impeccable leadership'. Staff say that they feel emotionally 'held' and are fully supported.

New staff are provided with a clear and comprehensive induction process. This helps them to confidently and competently settle into the team and their roles. Staff benefit from regular, high-quality, reflective supervision that incorporates the home's therapeutic model of care. This supports staff in their role and encourages the development of their practice.

The manager ensures that a learning and reflective culture is fully embedded in the team. Staff training is of good quality and responsive to the presenting needs of the children. Staff undertake a wide range of online and face-to-face courses. The manager recognises the important role that domiciliary staff play in children's lives. Consequently, they are also trained in the home's model of care in order to promote consistent responses to the children.

The staff and manager have close working relationships with other professionals that help to ensure that children have the help and support they need. Consequently, other professionals hold the staff in high regard and are highly complimentary of the care and support that they provide to the children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them, including the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: SC454294

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy, 210 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX

Responsible individual: Gary Yexley

Registered manager: Daniel Weston

Inspector

Cassie Martin, Social Care Inspector

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