

SC454294

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation and is registered to provide care for up to eight children. The home's statement of purpose states that the home is a specialist residential therapeutic community that provides therapeutic care and treatment along with family support to psychologically traumatised children. Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The home has not had a registered manager since May 2023. A new manager is in post and they have applied to Ofsted to be registered.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

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: 17 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2022	Full	Good
13/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/02/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home is inviting and calming, with plenty of spaces for children to relax, read, study, socialise and play. Mealtimes are sociable occasions and children help to devise the menu and cook for each other, which they enjoy. Children's bedrooms are furnished according to their preferences and there are clear examples of how children have contributed to the design of the home. The design of the dining room is a significant example of this.

Children are making progress in a number of areas, including healthy relationships, independence, education and developing their social skills. One child who has missed a significant period of education is now attending school consistently and is achieving well. Another child is learning how to manage their emotions better, which is reflected in the reduced number of behavioural incidents recorded.

The children have a clear understanding of their goals and how to reach them. The work towards their goals is supplemented by targeted key work and supportive interventions, such as feelings cards and routine cards, which is in line with children's learning and communication needs.

Children have access to a range of activities to support their well-being and social development. They are supported to maintain positive links with their families, friends and important people in their lives. Special occasions are well planned and birthdays are celebrated according to the children's wishes. A cultural calendar has been devised to enhance children's exposure to elements of their own identities as well as the world around them.

Children are supported to express themselves openly with the well-attuned group of adults who provide informed and considerate care. Children use the community meeting and wishes and feelings book to make their requests, which are responded to thoughtfully and sensitively. Every effort is made to grant children's wishes or to manage expectations when this may not be possible.

Children are actively involved in decisions about their physical environment and are clear about the rules of the home. They feel motivated and empowered to share their opinions in community meetings and can tolerate challenge from each other, when supported by adults.

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

Children say that they are safe and happy at this home, and talk positively about their relationships with the adults who care for them. Adults have good knowledge of safeguarding procedures and of the children's individual care needs and vulnerabilities. They understand how to respond to children in line with their support

plans and have developed trusting relationships with them, through daily conversations, quality time and key-work sessions.

Adults understand how to set appropriate boundaries for children, with a level of flexibility that enables children to have choice and control over their own lives. Adults interpret children's non-verbal and behavioural communication and respond helpfully, which reduces the likelihood of escalation in behaviour and reduces children's anxieties.

Adults assist children to make responsible choices and to understand their behaviour and experiences. Adults model empathy and help children to repair relationships after conflict. While this can be challenging for some children, adults persist in helping them to adopt these practices so that they can develop sustainable and healthy relationships.

Adults receive training that is specific to the needs of the children they care for. This helps to upskill the workforce so they are more confident in their approach to supporting children who have, for example, experienced bereavement or who may have a diagnosis of autism.

There has been a notable decline in the use of physical intervention in recent months. Improved management oversight has also ensured that any use of physical intervention is scrutinised effectively and that learning is drawn from these incidents when they occur. Following incidents, there is plenty of opportunity for reflective discussion between the managers and the adults. Children are consulted within the relevant timescales about any intervention they experience, however, the quality of records regarding children's feedback could be improved.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's manager has been in post since September 2023 and was awaiting the outcome of his registration application from Ofsted at the time of inspection. Since his appointment, the home's leadership team has provided a greater level of direction and stability for the adult team and the children, which has been pivotal to the recent improvements.

The requirements from the previous inspection have been met. The manager and leadership team have created greater accountability in the home by focusing their efforts on the areas identified for improvement. Agency staff are no longer used and recruitment has increased, which has helped to develop a more stable and familiar adult team so that children receive more consistent care.

The children and adults at the home have confidence in the manager's decisions and adults describe the home as being increasingly settled as changes are introduced. There have been improvements to the quality and regularity of supervision and training. Effective supervision ensures that adults are consulted and feel that their experiences are central to decisions made in the home. By improving this

communication and support, the manager has generated improved workforce retention.

Adults are relaxed and confident about their roles in the home. They speak positively about the support they receive from their colleagues and leaders. They are provided with opportunities to discuss any concerns they have and challenges that arise, so that solutions can be explored. The therapeutic model of the home requires adults to participate in reflective discussions as a group, which strengthens their understanding of the dynamics in the household. This encourages a culture of feedback and enhances adults' insight into their own behaviours and responses to children.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's views following restraint are comprehensive and linked directly to the incident record. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than five days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be offered the opportunity to access advocacy support to help them with this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)

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

Tash Williams, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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