

SC461240

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four children who have experienced trauma that has left them vulnerable.

The home has not had a registered manager since 18 November 2019. There is an acting manager in post who is not yet registered.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 March 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2018	Full	Good
05/09/2017	Full	Good
31/01/2017	Full	Good
19/07/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress. They have established positive relationships with a committed staff team. The children receive individualised support that enhances their opportunities and experiences.

The staff help the children to express their views and influence their daily activities through effective and creative key-working meetings. The key-work sessions are responsive to the individual and emerging complex needs of each child and enable them to understand and reflect on their responsibilities and their impact on the wider community.

The children enjoy a diverse range of activities. These include ice- and roller-skating, visits to local football matches and holidays. The staff find local clubs for the children that relate to their interests and hobbies. These opportunities provide the children with new and meaningful experiences.

All the children make notable progress in their education. Children benefit from reflective morning house meetings that focus on relaxation and grounding techniques. The staff work closely with schools to ensure that the children continue to make progress towards their targets. As a result, attendance and educational attainment for all children are enhanced.

Children are supported to stay in touch with their families because the staff are effective in their communication and planning. The staff team recognises the importance of these relationships and, consequently, children benefit from improved emotional well-being and an increased sense of identity.

The children make progress with their independence skills. The staff help the children to develop these skills through responsibilities in household chores and incentive schemes. The children attend additional vocational courses such as first aid and take advantage of local volunteering opportunities. As a result, children gain skills that will help them transition to adulthood.

The home is welcoming, spacious and appointed to a high standard. The children benefit from personalised bedrooms that are decorated in line with their preferences, creating a space that they are proud of.

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

Risks have reduced significantly for the children. Children who were previously involved in risk-taking behaviours in the community and were subject to exploitation are now safer. Clear, individualised risk assessments and protocols are actively followed by staff.

Behaviour management plans are detailed and are implemented effectively. There is an emphasis on proactive strategies and reinforcing clear boundaries that promotes positive behaviour. The staff use negative consequences proportionately. These approaches help the children to have a sense of security and, as a result, difficult and disruptive behaviour reduces over time.

When necessary, the staff use restrictive physical interventions. The incidents are recorded and subject to managerial oversight. The manager checks that staff's responses reflect the child's identified needs and behaviour management plan. This encourages the staff to provide safe individualised care.

The children know how to raise concerns. When allegations against staff have been made, they have been suitably managed. The children have been consulted with and appropriate referrals have been made to safeguard them.

The manager has not suitably updated the home's location risk assessment in line with children's identified vulnerabilities. Important consultations with local agencies have not been undertaken and information on crime statistics that could help to reduce the risks to children have not been sufficiently obtained or reviewed. This does not ensure that potential concerns are mitigated effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new manager has recently been appointed and is in the process of registration. He knows the children well and can outline their progress, plans and experiences. The manager has been well received by staff, families and professionals. Two requirements from the last inspection have been met to good effect.

The staff value their child-focused and personal development discussions in supervision meetings and annual appraisals. Regular and highly attended staff meetings ensure that effective communication and good support are embedded. The staff said that they feel well supported. This range of guidance provides the staff with direction and time for suitable reflection.

The managerial monitoring of records is generally good. The management team undertakes suitable internal quality reviews that identify strengths and areas of development sufficiently. External monitoring visits by an independent person provide a good level of scrutiny. However, a high proportion of these visits do not include consultation with children's families. In addition, the visitor does not include a clear statement on the well-being and safeguarding of children at the home. This undermines the overall quality assurance provided.

The home has experienced high staffing turnover recently. The management team has managed this without compromising the number of permanent experienced staff on shift. Although there is some understanding of why individual staff have left, no overarching review has taken place. Therefore, although the problem has been

recognised and the immediate impact is being managed, opportunities to identify underlying causes are missed.

Not all staff have undertaken the training that the organisation has offered. Significant training such as safeguarding has not been attained in a timely way by some staff. Furthermore, training deficits have been identified in safe ligature removal and managing self-injurious behaviour. Given the children's individual needs and the inexperience of some of the staff, this shortfall does not ensure that all staff have the necessary skills to understand and respond to children's vulnerabilities.

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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))	30/04/2020
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44(2)(a)(4)(a)(b))	24/04/2020
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))	24/04/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of turnover of staff, whether agency or directly employed, and be able to understand and, when possible, address any negative trends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)

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: SC461240

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Registered provider address: Third Floor, 24 Chiswell Street, Islington, London EC1Y 4YX

Responsible individual: Jean Lloyd

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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