

1234317

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is a privately operated children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 October 2017

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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 29 November 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The children living at the home feel safe and protected. They receive help to understand their behaviours through a model of care and therapeutic intervention that is tailored to the child's complex needs.

- All of the children are engaging in the on-site education and they have achieved 100% attendance. Participation and engagement in their educational programme have notably improved. The staff provide opportunities for the children to develop their confidence and social skills, and promote learning.
- The children have opportunities to engage in a wide range of social, educational and leisure activities. High staff ratios ensure that the children are safe and their well-being is promoted both in the community and in the home.
- Policies and procedures that underpin safe and effective practice in areas such as self-harm, restraint and going missing from care are robust, visual and receive regular managerial oversight.
- The newly appointed manager is ambitious in her vision for the home. She clearly understands the home's strengths and areas of development to ensure that the home continues to achieve its stated aims and objectives as outlined in the statement of purpose.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager needs to continue to develop a strong workforce which ensures that the home is properly staffed and resourced with permanent staff so that there is a reduction in the use of agency staff.
- The manager needs to ensure that staff, and in particular agency staff, are fully apprised of each child's complex needs and how those needs have an impact on their behaviour.
- The manager and staff would benefit from a more proactive approach in raising the profile of the home in the wider community, with other agencies and professionals, and continue to build on developing effective working relationships with families and professionals.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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, the 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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff – seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5(d))	30/11/2017
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure – that staff – manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(a)(iv)(b))	30/11/2017
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. (Regulation 31(1))	30/11/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the appointment of any temporary staff will not prevent children from receiving the continuity of care they need. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children living at the home receive on-site education that is tailored to meet their individual learning needs. The children are exposed to a range of resources and enjoy a varied curriculum that promotes and encourages learning in a safe and nurturing environment. The children's past educational experiences have been disrupted due to their complex behaviours. For one child, this involved regular exclusions. All of the children have 100% attendance and their participation and engagement are improving relative to their starting points. One child commented: 'We are designing a school emblem to go on our blazer. We asked for a uniform and school bag, just like other schools.'

The home offers a therapeutic model of care with the advantage of having an on-site psychologist, providing a valued role in the management and understanding of behaviour. The children benefit from a nurturing environment with clear boundaries alongside high staffing ratios, which the children are responding to. One social worker commented: '[Name] has been through a traumatic journey. Staff are doing an absolutely brilliant job with her; their depth of understanding is outstanding.'

The children's time is highly structured. The staff invest in the children and are attuned to their individual likes and dislikes. The children have a full programme of extra-curricular activities that promote a healthy lifestyle combined with opportunities to participate in clubs and other activities in the wider community. One child said: 'I go swimming, go-karting and horse riding every week. My favourite is when we all go roller-blading on a Friday and have a takeaway.' This impacts positively on the children's progress and provides positive experiences that enrich their lives. For another child, she said: 'I went on holiday this year. I have never had a holiday before, and it was ace!'

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

The manager adopts a robust and thorough process when considering new admissions to the home. Peer compatibility is given high priority and impact assessments clearly identify potential risk-taking behaviours to ensure that strategies are in place prior to admission. Careful and sensitive planning takes place when children arrive at the home, and children already placed contribute to the introduction of new children. In conversation with the manager, she said: '[Name] loves giving a guided tour and really welcomes new arrivals to the home. She tells them all the dos and don'ts.'

The home offers the children the chance to experience real stability over a two-year period. This allows children to engage in and progress through a three-phased model of therapeutic care. The children begin to develop a sense of safety. The behaviour management plans and risk assessments are highly individualised and include clear strategies to manage and reduce any risks. This has ensured that any safeguarding concerns that have arisen are promptly acted on and investigated in adherence to the

clear policies and procedures in place.

Risk-taking behaviours are clearly understood from the point of admission. Any risks that emerge because of children's behaviour, vulnerability or past experiences are revised and updated. The protection of children is given utmost importance. Immediate and effective action is taken by the staff. This action has resulted in a significant reduction in self-harm, going missing from home and child sexual exploitation. A social worker commented on one child's history of self-harm, stating: 'The home appears to have successfully managed to support [Name] through this crisis and I am confident they have the necessary support and strategies in place.' Equally, an independent reviewing officer stated: '[Name] is constantly in crisis. This placement offers a logical parenting approach that [Name] responds to.'

The children receive help and support to manage their feelings and to understand the impact that their behaviour has on themselves and others. The children have access to the internet only under close supervision and guidance. Access to social media is not permitted. Focused work is undertaken, often following a specific incident, underpinned by well-developed strategies in place to help the children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, focused work on promoting safe and healthy relationships, understanding the effects of puberty and practice in relation to safe sex has been completed following a recent incident in the home.

The manager follows the statutory guidance for young people who engage in risk-taking behaviours and will communicate concerns to the local authority and partner agencies attending all strategy meetings. The manager and responsible individual are extremely proactive in challenging local authorities and will escalate concerns appropriately where response to risk to self or others is not taken seriously.

The staff exercise positive behaviour techniques to de-escalate potentially volatile situations prior to using restraint or physical intervention. Records indicate that the use of restraint has only been used in circumstances when there has been a high risk to self and others. The manager has ensured that all of the staff have received refresher training in managing actual and potential aggression. The children are responding to the clear and consistent boundaries in place, and for one young person this has seen physical intervention and missing-from-care episodes significantly reduced.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home has recently appointed its third manager in a relatively short period of time. The manager is currently in the process of completing her level 5 in leadership and management and fulfilling her registration requirements. The manager has a good understanding of what the staff team does well and demonstrates drive and ambition in ensuring that there is a high quality of care and good outcomes for children. The manager knows the home well, having been promoted within the company.

The children have clearly developed close and trusting relationships with the more long-standing members of staff. The importance of continuity and consistency of care aids in

the recovery process. For some children, the turnover of staff and the use of agency staff have been unsettling and, on occasions, behaviours have been heightened. When difficult situations emerge as a result of this, the manager has ensured that the recording of such incidents is both accurate and timely, that action is taken and that the relevant statutory bodies are notified.

The manager's hands-on approach ensures that she has a clear understanding of the complex needs and plans for the children. Her managerial oversight, monitoring and auditing processes ensure that children are safeguarded, that their health and well-being are being maintained and that children are regularly consulted. The manager would benefit from increasing the profile of the home with partner agencies that support the home in providing specialist services.

The manager has commenced on a journey of improvement to ensure that the home is properly staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children. Recruitment of permanent staff has, for the manager, been a priority and this needs to continue to guarantee a well-established staff team. Good staffing ratios ensure that the children are effectively safeguarded and that their health and well-being are a priority. The manager needs to ensure that agency staff are fully apprised of each child's complex needs and how these have an impact on their behaviour.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Joyce Masson

Registered manager: Kate Berry

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, social care inspector

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