

1256452

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small group run by a private provider. The home is registered for up to five children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 December 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 6 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Two compliance notices were issued on 11 September 2017 in relation to shortfalls in the protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. A monitoring visit took place on 3 October 2017 to assess the progress. The steps in each of the compliance notices were met.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The children have positive relationships with staff who understand their

individual needs.

- The staff understand the importance of education. They support the children to attend school.
- The children say that they feel safe at the home, and that they know how to complain.
- Staff work well in partnership with professionals to help the children to make progress.
- Children who have a history of placement breakdowns are now stabilising in an environment in which they feel secure.
- Staff understand the importance of the children's friends and families, and facilitate contact with them.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Staff do not consistently gain children's opinions and comments when a sanction is applied. This does not ensure that children understand the reasons for the sanction, or help them to develop skills to reduce the likelihood of repeat incidents.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2017	Full	Inadequate

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

Recommendations

- Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

This is with particular regard to ensuring that any sanction given due to poor behaviour is discussed with the child to support their understanding and development.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress, taking into account their starting points, in all aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. The two children who are currently in placement benefit from consistent encouragement and support that contributes to change and improvement in their lives. A social worker said, 'I am very impressed with this home. He [child] can be very challenging and will do what he can to break placements down. He needs clear boundaries, which they [staff] are able to implement in a positive manner.'

The manager and staff demonstrate a detailed understanding of the children's needs. Since returning to the home on a full-time basis, the manager has reviewed the children's care plans. The children's views are included throughout. The children are encouraged to participate fully and, over time, gain an understanding of the reasons behind the decisions made. The children feel involved in their own care, and they appreciate that the actions implemented by staff are necessary to support their personal development.

Staff work very hard to establish trusting relationships with children. They achieve this through patience, consistent responses and a genuine warmth. As a result, children gradually experience fewer incidents of distress as they learn to manage their emotions in more productive ways. A social worker of a newly admitted child said, 'The manager has already been able to communicate with him. They [staff] are not just looking at the negative behaviour, they are noticing the child's personality. They encouraged him to stay and give his views at the planning meeting yesterday. I have not seen this achieved with him before.'

Children know how to complain. They are encouraged to express their views in the weekly children's meetings and individual key-work sessions, and through consultation

forms. None of the children have made a complaint, and those spoken with report that they feel listened to and treated fairly. One child said, 'I like this home. Things are good. I can talk to the staff. I know how to make a complaint; there are forms available but I haven't needed to.' Good levels of communication and consultation help empower children and increase their self-confidence.

Children's educational needs form an important part of their time living at the home. The children receive on-site education from the provider's local school provision. Children who have struggled to consistently attend school prior to admission have made significant progress. One child has increased their attendance from 20% to 100%. Staff work closely with education professionals to ensure that children attend, and they encourage the children to reach their full educational potential.

At the point of admission to the home, the staff promptly register the children with core health services such as the doctor, dentist and optician. The children quickly gain a better understanding of the importance of being healthy and of making good lifestyle choices. One child who had never had an eye check recently agreed to visit the optician for the first time ever. Staff encourage the children to eat healthily. The children become involved in preparing their own meals. This means that they are acquiring good life skills and an understanding of how to look after their health.

Staff understand the importance of contact for both the children and their families. The staff encourage and facilitate contact in line with the placing authority's care plan. Children who live a long way from home are supported to travel to their contact locations, as well as to stay in touch with loved ones by telephone or social media. The children maintain positive relationships with the important people in their lives.

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

Children say that they feel safe living at the home. Care-planning documentation accurately describes their needs. The manager ensures that the plans reflect any changing risk, alongside detailing decreases in risks. Up-to-date risk assessments support new and existing staff to understand the children's vulnerabilities and how to best promote their safety.

Each child has an individualised missing-from-home protocol for the staff to follow. These protocols guide the staff on the action to take, and the places that the child may frequent when they go missing from the home. There has only been one incident of missing from home since the last inspection. The chronology of the timeline of events is detailed and clear. The manager and staff actively searched for the child to ensure that they were safely located. One of the children had a significant history of going missing almost daily. This child has had no incidents of missing since their admission to the home six weeks ago. The structured environment enables the children to stabilise and begin to recognise unsafe behaviours and learn how to make safer choices.

Staff support the children to learn, through general discussion and direct key-working sessions, how to keep themselves safe. Due to the good relationships that the children

have with the staff, the children are confident about informing staff if they feel unsafe. Recently, one of the children was able to talk openly and honestly with staff about an unsafe incident that occurred while they were away from the home. Honest and open conversations enable the staff to adapt any future plans to ensure that the children receive a strong response to any risk of harm.

There have been three incidents of physical intervention since the last inspection. Physical intervention is always a last resort, and is only used when necessary to protect the children or the staff from harm. Behaviour management systems are effective. Despite some children displaying very challenging behaviours, the de-escalation strategies work. The strategies implemented by staff help the children to learn how to regulate their behaviour at times of emotional upset. Positive behaviour is encouraged and promoted with rewards. Children respond well to the clear boundaries that the staff put in place around behaviour.

Safe recruitment practice helps to reduce the risk of contact with unsuitable adults. There has been one safeguarding incident since the last inspection. The manager dealt with this matter swiftly and very well. The designated officer said, 'I have no concerns regarding this home.' Staff receive appropriate training and feel confident about their safeguarding roles. They have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and recognise that they have a duty to safeguard the children.

Children receive rewards for positive behaviour and sanctions for negative behaviour. Sanctions given are fair and proportionate. The manager evaluates the records to ensure that each sanction is effective. However, there is a lack of consistency in staff gaining and recording the child's views. This does not ensure that the children understand the reasons for the sanction, or help them to develop skills to reduce the likelihood of further incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since July 2017 and has a level 4 diploma in health and social care. When the home initially opened in July, the experienced manager was not based on site full time. The lack of regular oversight from the manager resulted in serious shortfalls in the day-to-day running of the home. Since the last inspection, the manager has returned to the home on a full-time basis, and the effectiveness of leadership and management has improved significantly. The manager is proactive and motivated in his manner, and is well supported by an enthusiastic deputy manager. Together they have worked hard to address the shortfalls raised at the last inspection. A staff member said, 'This home is definitely well managed. The manager is really positive and supportive. The practice in the home has really developed with him present, and the necessary improvements have been made.' The management structure is now strong, with the team working together to ensure that the children's progress is continuous.

The monitoring of care practice and the children's progress is strong. Weekly reports highlight each child's progress. These weekly reports enable social workers to see what the children have achieved over time in all aspects of their development. Monthly

management audits of all records emphasise any changes or patterns in behaviour, and help to contribute further to care-planning arrangements. Alongside this, the provider's clinical team completes a three-monthly analysis report that evaluates the effectiveness of work undertaken with each child. These monitoring systems enable the manager to demonstrate the impact that living at this home is having on the children's lives.

The shortfalls identified at the last inspection resulted in 11 statutory requirements. Five of the requirements were assessed as met at the monitoring visit in October 2017. At this inspection, the manager has met the six remaining requirements. There is now an updated statement of purpose that provides an accurate overview of current staff and their skills, and the management arrangements.

The staff continue to receive monthly supervision. Improvements made to the content of supervision ensure that time is now spent on reflective practice. This means that staff spend time discussing the needs and experiences of the children. Staff are encouraged to acknowledge any difficulties that they have encountered and to identify any support that they might require. Good-quality supervision helps to equip the staff with the skills to meet each child's needs and to provide a good quality service.

Staff development is good. The staff either hold, or are in the process of undertaking, the required level 3 diploma. All of the staff have completed their mandatory training. This includes first aid training, the lack of which had previously been identified as a shortfall. All of the staff now have the important skills required to respond promptly and effectively in the event of an injury or accident.

The rota evidences that the home has good staffing levels and is able to provide one-to-one care to the children who are currently in placement. When there is a need to make changes to the rota, the manager clearly records the actual members of staff who has worked on any particular shift. Past rosters are stored safely to allow scrutiny should an allegation be made. This clarity in recording ensures transparency and accountability by enabling clear identification of who was working at the home on any specific day.

The manager has introduced a new system of staff induction to ensure that all staff are aware that they have a duty to read and familiarise themselves with the needs of each child. Any staff member who did not receive this induction initially has had this included in their recent supervisions. The home now has three permanent night staff. These staff are reading and signing the risk assessments and the children's care plans. The systems designed to ensure that staff know and understand the plans for the children are effective.

The children's care plans are now detailed, individualised, accurate and updated accordingly. The plans provide staff with a good understanding of each child's individual history, and aid them to provide good personalised care. The goal of the home is to provide a period of stability to the children, to enable them to move on to a longer-term care provision. The children's plans now include their targets, and provide staff with the clarity that they require to meet the children's complex needs. Staff spoken with show good insight into the children's needs and behaviours. The staff treat the children with dignity and respect. The manager and staff are determined that the children have a

positive experience while living at the home.

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: 1256452

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Ltd

Registered provider address: Spirare Limited, Mey House, Bridport Road, Poundbury, Dorset DT1 3QY

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Daniel Elliott

Inspector

Lynne Drage, social care inspector

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