

# SC462729

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 provides care and accommodation for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 18 to 19 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:** 7 March 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children have positive experiences that enable them to develop their self-confidence and independence skills.
- Partnership working is good. The management team is not afraid to challenge other agencies to ensure that children receive a good-quality service.
- Staff understand the importance of education. They encourage and support the children to attend.
- Children said that they feel safe at the home and know how to complain.
- Professionals and parents have absolute confidence that the staff meet the children's needs well.
- Well-planned transitions in and out of the home help new children to settle and provide positive endings.
- Staff recognise the importance of facilitating and helping the children to maintain contact between the children and their friends and families.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The home has not consistently requested an independent return home interview from the responsible local authority following incidents of children going missing from the home.
- There is no arrangement in place to scrutinise the records of physical interventions that the manager is directly involved in, to ensure impartiality.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 07/03/2017      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 10/08/2016      | Full            | Good                    |
| 26/01/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 21/07/2015      | Full            | Good                    |

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

### Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress and having positive experiences as a result of living at this home. Staff complete comprehensive care plans that fully include the views of the children. This results in the children receiving good-quality individualised care and support from a staff team that understands their needs and ambitions for the future. A social worker said, 'I'm really pleased with the care provided. He [a child] has had significant input into his care plan, and progressed in all areas. Staff know his trigger points and work with him well to reduce incidents. It's a fantastic placement for him.' A child's parent said, 'He is a changed boy and it's all down to the really good care he receives from them. It's a spot-on placement.'

Staff have high aspirations for the children. They encourage and support them with their individual educational packages. When children are reluctant to engage, staff are quick to respond in a proactive manner by working in partnership with social workers and education professionals to improve outcomes. A social worker said, 'He [a child] struggles with education. The home has been very proactive. They [staff] have managed to engage him by working with education professionals and sourcing a holistic package for him.'

Children know how to complain. They are encouraged to express their views in individual key-working sessions and meetings. Children reported that they always feel listened to and treated fairly. One of the children has made a complaint since the last inspection. This child said, 'Staff listen. I'm happy with the way that they resolved it.' The good levels of communication and consultation are empowering for children and confirm to them that their views are valued.

Professionals and parents are complimentary about the high-quality care and good level of communication that they have with the home. Strong partnership working is evident. However, this does not prevent appropriate challenge. Professionals reported that the manager and staff will not hesitate to advocate for a child to ensure that the child receives a good-quality service from all involved. One of the children's independent reviewing officers said, 'They [staff] are very proactive in pushing services forward for him.' A parent commented, 'He [a child] is looked after so well. They [staff] support with everything and always keep me updated. I can't fault them on anything.'

Well-planned transitions into the home help new children to settle quickly. Prior to a new admission, the manager carefully considers all information available to him about a potential new child, alongside the needs of those children already living at the home. On arrival, the children receive a detailed children's guide to help them to understand the daily routines of the home. Careful planning and a warm welcome help children to settle and feel secure in their new environment.

Staff recognise the importance of promoting contact between the children and their families and friends in line with the placing authority's care plan. Staff provide transport and supervision when required. Older children are encouraged as part of their independence planning to acquire the necessary skills to travel by themselves. Prior to a child undertaking such journeys, staff spend time with them familiarising them with the route to ensure that the child has the knowledge and confidence to travel safely.

The stability provided by staff supports children to maintain long-term placements. One of the children has resided at the home for over three years. He is very content to remain until he is ready to move onto independent living. The children spoken with during this inspection have taken full advantage of the support available to them. They are proud to acknowledge that the practical support provided has enhanced their self-care abilities. Skills gained include cooking, budgeting, laundry and general housekeeping tasks. Learning vital future life skills helps the children to achieve successful transitions into adult life.

During this inspection, the staff enjoyed a visit from a young person who transitioned from the home this September (2017) after turning 18. He said, 'I lived here for over three years. This home was the best thing for me. Staff taught me basic manners, prepared me to look after myself and helped me massively when I was revising. They supported me 100% to get an education. I learned how to drive and the owner of the home bought me my first car. When I left, the owner and staff took me to my college and helped me to settle in my new accommodation. I have nothing bad to say about this home. They helped and supported me all the way.'

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

Children said that they have good relationships with the staff and feel safe living at the home. One child said, 'I like living here. Staff are brilliant. They always try to help, and they keep us safe. This is a good home.' Another child said, 'I feel safe here. This is the

safest home I have been in. I wouldn't change anything about this home.' The trusting relationships developed with staff provide children with a strong sense of safety and well-being.

Staff undertake detailed individual risk assessments for all of the children. These assessments are comprehensive and updated accordingly. The manager ensures that staff are aware of any changes in behaviours through daily discussions in handovers and staff meetings. This means that staff are aware of any new guidance to follow to reduce risks further.

Children receive sanctions for negative behaviour, and positive behaviour is encouraged with rewards. The sanctions given are restorative in nature, fair and proportionate. Staff explain the reason for the sanction and seek the child's views and opinions. This aids the child to recognise negative behaviour and explore alternative ways to manage emotions. Rewards include an extra activity such as going out for a meal or coffee. Children also enjoy being able to earn extra pocket money by helping with chores in the home. This helps to further reinforce positive behaviour.

When a child goes missing from the home, staff follow the procedures outlined in the child's individual missing person policy. The staff are proactive and do everything they can by working in partnership with the police to locate the child. On the child's safe return, the staff speak with the child to help them to recognise the dangers associated with this risky behaviour. The manager and staff are aware that following a missing-from-home episode, an independent return home interview is required. Records show that a request has been made in the majority of incidences. However, not all of the children have consistently received an interview. This fails to ensure that all children have the opportunity to speak freely with an independent person unconnected to the home.

Staff manage behaviour skilfully and are successful in implementing strategies and de-escalation techniques. Physical interventions are rare, and only three incidents have occurred since the last inspection. The children have the opportunity to talk through each incident that they are involved in. This enables the children to think about their behaviour and helps them to make better choices in the future. The records of these incidents are detailed. The manager provides oversight of the incidents to ensure that all interventions are proportionate and justified. However, there is no arrangement to scrutinise the records of incidents that the manager has had direct involvement in, to ensure impartiality.

There have been no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection. The designated officer said, 'This home seeks appropriate advice. I have no concerns.' Staff spoken with have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures, and recognise that they have a duty to safeguard the children.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager has been in post since June 2017 and is currently in the process of

applying to become the home's registered manager. He has worked as a registered manager in adult services and has prior experience of working in residential childcare. The manager is child focused and committed to achieving the very best outcomes for the children in his care. He and the experienced deputy manager work well together to ensure that progress is continual. A staff member commented, 'This home is definitely well managed. The manager is very hands-on, and both he and the deputy manager are extremely supportive.'

Established staff members have remained, and bank staff cover any gaps in the rota. No agency staff are required. The children have long-standing good-quality relationships with the bank staff. There are always sufficient staff to ensure that the children receive individual care from staff who know and understand them well. Children spoken with during this inspection confirmed that any changes to the staff team had not caused any inconsistencies. One child said, 'The staff don't change much here. I like all the staff. They do what they need to do to make sure it is a calm and safe home for us.'

The manager uses effective monitoring systems that enable him to have a good understanding and oversight of the needs of the children and the home. The staff write detailed daily logs on each child. These form the basis of the monthly reports for the social workers. These monthly reports detail all appointments, incidents and progress made. This means that there is a clear record for each child of the impact that the home is having on their lives.

Children's participation is good. There are regular house meetings, to enable the children to share their views. The children and staff discuss menus, activities and aspects of decoration and furnishing. Children have regular key-work sessions that cover a wide variety of topics. The sessions help and support the children to look at behaviours and anything that may be worrying them. Children said that staff value their views.

The manager has met the two requirements made at the previous inspection. The manager monitors the implementation of the home's behaviour management policy effectively. Evidence seen at this inspection confirmed that prompt reviews of action taken after any incident result in a consistent response to staff managing challenging behaviours. The second shortfall related to a failure to notify Ofsted of a significant incident. There have been no delays in notifying Ofsted of any incidents. All notifications are appropriate and provide details of actions taken by the home to reduce further incidents.

The one recommendation set at the last inspection is met. This related to staff receiving ongoing learning about their roles. Following any new incident, staff now receive a thorough debrief. Alongside this, a discussion is held in staff meetings to enable staff to reflect on practice and consider possible strategies to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring. Staff continue to benefit from regular supervision that includes a discussion about their own development. Newly recruited staff benefit from a comprehensive induction, and all staff have access to a wide range of training opportunities. All the staff have completed their mandatory training and either hold or are in the process of undertaking the required level 3 diploma. There is a good level of

continuous learning, to ensure that staff are well equipped to provide good-quality care.

## **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:** SC462729

**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:** Post vacant  
Jordan Southgate

## Inspector

Lynne Drage, social care inspector



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