

SC047894

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a group run by an independent provider. The children's home specialises in the care of girls predominantly aged 11 to 18 years from difficult and troubled backgrounds, and who display emotional and behavioural difficulties and are at risk of child sexual exploitation and going missing from care.

The registered manager left the service in December 2017. A newly appointed manager, who has yet to be registered, took up post in November 2017.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 April 2018

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: 5 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2017	Full	Good
20/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/07/2016	Full	Good
26/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p> <p>This is with particular regard to ensuring that reviews and reflections take place following the use of any ground recovery hold and that the location risk assessment considers the risk of the nearby road.</p>	18/05/2018
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential;</p> <p>and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	18/05/2018
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	18/05/2018

<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(a))</p>	<p>16/04/2018</p>
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”);</p> <p>or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home;</p> <p>or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b))</p>	<p>01/10/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))</p>	<p>01/06/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))</p>	<p>16/04/2018</p>
<p>The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person’s report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (7)(a))</p> <p>This is with particular regard to ensuring that reports are submitted in a timely manner.</p>	<p>01/05/2018</p>

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Overall, the children experience a good quality of direct support from the staff who look after them. Safeguarding practice is generally good, although the records require improvement. The staff work hard to maintain positive relationships, and any concerns are quickly shared and responded to appropriately. While some progress has been made, further work is required before leadership and management can be deemed good.

Progress for the children is mixed. Professionals report that the two children currently living at the home are making progress because of the care that they receive from the staff. Two other children have experienced placement breakdowns following

deterioration in their behaviour.

The children are making very good initial progress with their on-site education. One child has had 100% attendance since arrival at the home, having barely attended education prior to admission. Another child now talks with determination about her educational aspirations.

One child spoke of making progress in managing her behaviour and her feelings. She felt that the staff had contributed to this. She said, 'If we have attitude, they call you out. If you are rude, they call you out on it. If you are being violent or hurting yourself, they restrain. They manage it really well to be honest. You think before you speak.' Professionals reinforced this. One professional said, 'She [the child] was very distressed when I first met her. There was no emotional investment. She is now able to hold a conversation. That could only be by the work of the placement and the staff.'

The staff are caring, empathetic, and sensitive to the needs of the children. There are good relationships between the staff and the children. A child said, 'They [the staff] actually help us. Even if we do not want that help, they still help us. They care about us. It is more than a job to them. They hug us when we need it. They understand us.' Professionals speak positively about the staff and the manager.

The staff value the children's views. The children recognise this and talk about ways in which their views have been listened to. They are able to identify people with whom they could raise concerns.

The children are able to access therapeutic support. Professionals report that this benefits the children. A professional said, 'She [the child] accessed therapy and is turning into a very reflective young person. She was talking about her behaviours. This is an area in which she has progressed significantly.'

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has conducted peer reviews on the work of the home. This has resulted in positive feedback regarding the quality of the therapeutic approach that the staff use. Professionals reported that the children have benefited from the approach and are developing their ability to learn from, reflect on and adapt their behaviour.

The children are encouraged to participate in activities that offer new and exciting opportunities and enable appropriate risk-taking.

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

Since the last inspection, only one child has gone missing. This incident occurred during overnight family contact. This low number of incidents is despite the fact that the home works with children who have substantial histories of going missing. This reflects a significant reduction in high-risk behaviour and means that children are safer as a result of the care that they receive.

The children report that staff ensure that relationships are restored after incidents occur. One child said, 'They [the staff] come and talk to you. They never stop talking to you. Even if you have hurt them. Even if you have said something horrible. They never hold this against you.'

Concerns about the staff are shared with the designated officer. The designated officer reports that these concerns are well managed and that allegations are handled appropriately. Other professionals supported this assertion. A social worker said, 'They [the staff] take all of the allegations very seriously. I am very aware of what is happening.'

The staff have used ground recovery holds on a number of occasions, sometimes for long periods of time. The records of these incidents lack sufficient detail, review and reflection, and are not consistently clear about why the holds were applied for a long duration. Consequently, it is not always clear whether the holds were the minimum intervention needed to achieve the desired result. Lack of review of the records reduces the potential for learning from serious incidents during which children experience an elevated risk as a result of the techniques used.

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

A new manager has recently been appointed but is yet to be registered. She feels supported by the wider organisation as she develops in her role. The staff report that her arrival has had a positive effect on the home. Recent progress is evident, although a number of managerial shortfalls remain. These shortfalls mean that the staff are not yet receiving the quality of support and guidance necessary.

The manager has failed to submit notifications to Ofsted as required by regulation. This shortfall significantly affected Ofsted's ability to monitor practice at the home and the home's response to emerging safeguarding issues.

The high staff turnover has resulted in an inexperienced and predominantly unqualified workforce. Some staff who should hold a relevant level 3 qualification have not acquired this within the requisite timeframe.

The oversight of staff training is ineffective. The manager could not locate information about how many of the staff had undertaken training around child sexual exploitation. There has been at least one occasion when there has been no first-aid trained member of staff on duty overnight. This leaves children at risk if they need medical attention overnight.

The new manager has made progress in addressing the frequency of supervisions. However, the manager and the area manager were unable to locate any records of appraisals for the staff. They do not know if staff have had these. Lack of appraisal means that the staff, particularly those with limited experience, do not access the appropriate support and guidance that they need to carry out their roles effectively.

Independent monitoring reports are not submitted to Ofsted in a timely manner. Four of the last five reports had not been received until after the next independent monitoring visit had taken place. Lack of timely report submission affects Ofsted's ability to monitor the service effectively.

The location risk assessment does not assess the risk associated with the unlit stretch of road outside the home. The assessment fails to explore the risks posed to children who may go out on the road angry, distressed or determined to leave in the dark. Consequently, it does not consider how those risks could be mitigated.

The statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect changes in supervision arrangements for night staff. Nor does it accurately reflect the current approach to recruitment as it is no longer the case that the staff being recruited usually have experience. While this has little effect on the children, it is a recurring issue as it was identified at the last inspection.

The staff, manager and senior managers have high expectations of the children and have a good understanding of the children's needs, experiences and plans.

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: SC047894

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Focus Limited

Registered provider address: Care Focus Ltd, 3rd Floor, 24 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4YX

Responsible individual: Jean Lloyd

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Ashley Hinson, social care inspector

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