

1250931

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The staff at this home look after children who have experienced disrupted development and multiple placement moves. The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 8 September 2017. In this home, the staff are referred to as adults rather than staff. The report, therefore, refers to adults when referring to staff.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 October 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 15 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/08/2017	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals etc. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54-55, paragraph 10.23)

In particular, the registered person should ensure that they record the progress made in meeting the home's development plan's goals in more detail.

- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with nutritious meals suitable for each child's needs. Where appropriate, children should be involved in choosing and preparing meals and opportunities to sit together and eat should be promoted. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.8)

In particular, the registered person should ensure that menus planned provide details about what meal will be prepared each day for any particular dietary needs.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make excellent progress here because a tenacious team of adults works together to create child-friendly, nurturing care. The adults constantly look for opportunities to find solutions to the difficulties that children face.

Thoughtful preparation for a child's arrival helps him or her to settle quickly and develop positive relationships with adults. One parent said: 'I was shocked [when they visited before he came to live here]. The house was lovely, and his bedroom was decorated with dinosaurs which he loves.' The parent also said that she was impressed with how quickly the adults engaged with her child and that he was happy in their company from the start.

The adults' support for the children's education is excellent. It makes a big difference to children's engagement and learning. The organisation's education co-ordinator has worked with the adults to successfully encourage children's interest in reading. She works with the adults to ensure that any child who comes to live in the home is quickly found a school placement. The co-ordinator will also provide local authorities with an assessment of children's learning abilities if necessary to help them make decisions. During the 2018 summer term, the registered manager arranged for four children to receive support in school from the adults who care for them. This assisted children to maintain their education placements when they were struggling.

Children's independence is supported well, and their views are valued and acted on. The structured programme of development is well considered. It supports children to incrementally learn how to care for themselves. Changes have been made to some routines in the home such as bedtimes. Children told the inspector that they were still not happy with the bedtimes in place. The manager immediately decided to take this to the children's meeting held on the second day of inspection to discuss this further.

Activities both in and outside the home provide children with a range of opportunities to have fun, develop their interests and feel valued. They are supported to develop relationships with each other and to develop relationships outside of the home. Memories of children's time living in the home are regularly recorded in photo albums. A recent video and commentary for a child over the seven years that she has lived in the home demonstrated real care and affection.

Children's health is monitored carefully. Adults identify concerns quickly and take appropriate action to ensure that children get the right medication if necessary, or to remove it if it is no longer helpful. Children are encouraged to be active and the home-cooked meals are varied and nutritious. However, menus do not demonstrate the plans in place for any alternative diets that are needed.

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

Children are safeguarded and helped to keep themselves safe. Adults follow local safeguarding procedures appropriately. Adults know about current issues that children are facing, such as county lines, and take these into consideration when they assess children's safety. Any concerns that children raise are carefully logged and discussed appropriately with relevant safeguarding agencies. Records of safeguarding incidents are clear, detailed and provide a good record of how the adults have managed an incident.

Frequent and relevant discussions between adults and children help children to develop better coping strategies and develop stability. Help for children to recognise and name their emotions is exceptional. For example, over several days the adults talked to a child about a difficult meeting she was to attend. The child was supported to find ways to say what she wanted to say and helped to think about how to manage her emotions during the meeting. This practice was very successful and resulted in the child's voice being heard and her coping better in a stressful situation.

Adults plan, risk assess and record the support that they provide carefully, which helps children to behave well and reduces the likelihood of challenging behaviour. Children have not gone missing or been absent without permission for several months. If they try to leave, adults act appropriately and are very good at assessing and managing the risks that children put themselves in. Sanctions are appropriate and restorative. Children have clear targets for what they need to achieve to gain rewards. There is an appropriate balance between rewards and sanctions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are child focused, ambitious for children and lead by example. They continually support the adults to be curious about the children and think about how they care for them. This results in well-motivated team members who are reflective and support and challenge each other well.

The planning and monitoring systems are well organised and clear. Any deficits are quickly remedied. Leaders and managers know the strengths of the home and plan well to improve weaknesses. Nevertheless, the home's development plan does not show how the identified improvements will be achieved. The managers have identified weaknesses in the monthly visitor reports and are taking action to improve these.

The senior management team in this organisation is visible and takes a personal interest in how children are cared for. The team uses research and evaluation very well. Currently, the management team is focusing on improving adults' abilities to reflect on practice and make decisions using theories from the aviation industry about pilot error (black box thinking). This has resulted in more guidance on how to think through problems and a greater emphasis on unpicking and learning from difficult situations.

There are sufficient numbers of adults to meet children's needs. Agency staff are not used here. Several adults work part time across the organisation's homes and are known to children. This supports continuity of care by adults who are familiar with the organisation's expectations. The permanent team of adults who work here has changed

considerably in the last year. It is commendable that adults' expertise and skill with children has been maintained to a high standard. Adults are extremely child focused and are increasingly showing a therapeutic approach to care, which is one of the managers' aims for this home.

This is a learning organisation which continually updates and adapts its training programme to suit children's needs. The adults receive additional support from an organisational trainer who works one-to-one with adults who are finding issues challenging or who would benefit from additional training. There has been some struggle to get all the adults appropriately qualified. The manager has put in place a full plan to ensure that this is quickly rectified as quickly as possible.

Adults speak positively about the support that they receive. One adult said that the registered manager had supported her well to improve her relationship with a child. The manager's support had also helped her develop greater resilience in managing difficult situations with all children. Regular team meetings are well attended and inclusive. Adults say that they are supported well by managers and the organisation to do their jobs well. Several adults said that the best thing about working here is seeing children progress.

There remain strong links to all professionals who support the children. One professional responded to an Ofsted questionnaire this year: 'I like that they are very welcoming... and young person focused... They keep me updated on all relevant issues, attend all meetings... and come prepared with reports/information.'

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: 1250931

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Mountfields House, Epinal Way, Loughborough,
Leicestershire LE11 3GE

Responsible individual: Benjamin Jordan

Registered manager: Lisa Simmons

Inspector

Ruth Coler, social care inspector

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