

# SC384018

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Limited

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 providers care for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The provider operates a school nearby.

The manager's fitness was assessed on 30 October 2019, and his registration was confirmed on 1 November 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 30 to 31 October 2019

**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:** 5 December 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2018	Full	Good
31/07/2017	Full	Good
26/07/2016	Full	Good
13/01/2016	Interim	Sustained 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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	29/11/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44(1)(2)(a))</p>	31/12/2019

### 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)

- Regulation 19(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- Staff should understand the system for rewarding and celebrating positive behaviour and recognising when children have managed situations well. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.39)

## Inspection judgements

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

Children develop their self-confidence and make good progress. They feel valued and play an integral role in making decisions about their care and their future. Children experience a strong sense of belonging and immense pride in the decisions that they have made. One of the children said, 'Coming to this home was the best decision that I have ever made in my life.'

Staff encourage children, as they get older, to take on more responsibility for their plans and future. Children benefit from support to help them prepare for leaving care and living independently. Independence plans set practical, gradual targets to enable children to practise budgeting, shopping, cooking and managing their free time. When the children leave the home, their moves, in the main, are well planned. Staff accompany children to see their new accommodation and help them to get to know the area that they are moving to.

Staff work with the placing local authorities to ensure that children can maintain relationships with their families. A parent said, 'The staff have helped transform [my child] into the person that I had hoped she would be, which I did not think was possible. They [the staff] have been brilliant.' A social worker echoed this. They said, 'The progress that [the child] has made because of this home is above and beyond my expectations.'

Children feel supported and listened to. Staff are fully committed to and do not give up on children. The staff work closely with schools and other agencies to ensure that children have opportunities to succeed. All the children are making good progress in education. One child received pupil of the year award at the end of the summer term.

Children take part in a wide and varied range of social, leisure and educational activities. Staff continually encourage children to try new things and to make the most of

opportunities. This helps the children to develop new hobbies and interests, grow in confidence and develop their social skills. One of the children was excited to tell the inspector that she is going to Disneyland Paris for her birthday early next year.

The home's environment feels homely, nurturing and warm. Well-furnished and well-decorated communal areas give children a choice about where to spend their leisure time. Children's bedrooms are well presented and are personalised according to their taste.

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

One child has made remarkable progress in reducing the level of her previously high-risk behaviour. With ongoing support from the staff, she has completely detached herself from a high-risk gang that was involved in her incidents of going missing from home, criminality and drug and alcohol misuse. This is a real achievement, which the child is very proud of.

Staff take their safeguarding and parenting roles very seriously. They consistently work in the best interests of the children and are assertive in delivering difficult messages to children when this is required. Messages and boundaries are clearly communicated. Children fully understand how staff will continue to keep them and others safe.

Staff have a good understanding of the triggers of children's behaviour. Timely intervention, discussions and positive reinforcement minimise children's need to present challenging behaviours. Consequently, staff have only been required to use physical restraint to keep children safe on two occasions since the last inspection.

Staff are proactive in preventing children from going missing. The missing-from-home protocols and logs are completed in full. However, for one child, out of seven incidents of going missing, none have been followed up with an independent return home interview, despite several requests made by the home to the relevant placing local authority. This means that children do not receive a consistent message that social workers will follow up these incidents.

Staff accurately record the use of sanctions. However, some sanctions appear to lack thought or creativity. Children are rewarded for positive behaviour. However, most rewards do not consider individual children's interests and preferences and are of a monetary nature.

Risks to children are understood from the outset of the placement. Risk assessments are effective in providing guidance to ensure that children are safe. Risk assessments are responsive and enable children to have increasing levels of freedom. This means that they can safely experience new challenges and develop new skills.

The home uses alarms on all the children's bedroom doors to monitor the children's movements at night. Although there may be the need to use alarms for some children who may go missing at night, it is unclear why these are in use for other children. The

system in place does not allow for individual room alarms to be set. This has an impact on other children who may not require them.

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

The registered manager has high expectations of himself and of his staff team. He expects all children to have the best experiences and outcomes.

The registered manager and deputy manager lead a committed, skilled and knowledgeable staff team. Staff spoke highly of the managers and said that they are well supported by them. The staff have regular supervision and reflective practice sessions that enable them to discuss the care of children as well as their own practice.

Staff receive a good range of training opportunities, including essential courses such as safeguarding and first aid. In addition, they undertake a range of courses that are relevant to specific children's needs, including managing self-harm, understanding mental health needs and raising awareness of peer-on-peer abuse and substance misuse. Half of the staff team is qualified and holds a suitable level 3 diploma. The remaining staff are working towards the qualification or due to be enrolled once they have completed their probation.

Managers and staff work closely with other professionals and families. This close partnership working makes sure that children continue to progress. Staff and managers regularly review the information held on the children's files to ensure that it remains current. Records are well organised and to hand.

The registered manager knows what the home does well. He makes good use of a range of quality assurance processes to ensure that all aspects of the home's performance and children's progress are routinely monitored. External monitoring is also used effectively. However, the independent visitor does not consistently speak with children, their parents and carers, staff and professionals to gain a rounded view of children's care.

The manager has met the two requirements and three recommendations raised at the last inspection to good effect.

## **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:** SC384018

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Surecare Residential Limited

**Registered provider address:** 13a Apton Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3SP

**Responsible individual:** Emma Barr

**Registered manager:** Kevin Dobson

## Inspector

Cathy Russell, social care inspector

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