

SC462951

Registered provider: ERA Care Limited 5921904

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small number of homes that are run by an independent provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children aged between 11 and 18 who cannot live with their own families. The children require support and help in order to manage their emotions and behaviour.

The experienced and suitably qualified manager has been registered for 18 months.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 December 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 outstanding

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

Date of last inspection: 7 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/05/2018	Full	Good
17/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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>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—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (‘the Level 3 Diploma’); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016. (Regulation 32(4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b))</p>	<p>16/03/2020</p>

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff nurture the young people, who feel cared about and loved. As a result, the young people build close relationships with all the staff and like living at the home. There is an easy atmosphere and constant good-humoured banter. One young person said, ‘This is not just a home. This is my home. This is the best place. Everything at this home, [and] everything that they [the staff] do, is with love.’

The matching process before young people move into the home is rigorous and includes the needs of the young people who already live at the home. Consequently, the young people get along well together. They enjoy a stable home where they mature and develop.

The young people are proud of the progress that they have made. Families and partner professionals were very complimentary about the home. One young person's social worker said, 'It has been fantastic for him [the young person]. The child on the referral paperwork is not recognisable as the young person today. That is down to the work of the staff.'

All of the young people have made progress in their education. The staff supported one young person gradually, step-by-step, to draw them back into school. The staff carefully considered which school would best meet his needs. As a result, this young person moved from an engrained position of non-school attendance to flourishing in a school environment.

The staff are well attuned to each of the young people and provide individualised, well-tailored care and support. The staff ensure that the young people's views are central to the support that they receive. The staff make sure that suitable plans are in place to support the young people to spend time with their families at Christmas. Well-considered plans are in place to support these families, should a crisis arise.

The staff support the young people to develop good independence skills that will help them in adult life. The staff are creative at exploring opportunities such as volunteering, which may help to build the young people's confidence and work readiness skills. The staff motivate the young people to aspire and achieve in all aspects of their lives.

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

The young people are safe and well supported by the staff. The close relationships that the young people develop with the staff and each other underpin their ability to resolve day-to-day issues amicably. The staff skilfully help the young people to navigate group conflict and to build positive relationships with each other. As a result, the home is a calm and settled place.

The young people believe that the staff always have their best interests at heart. The young people engage well in discussions about keeping safe. The help and support that the staff provide means that, for the majority of young people, individual risks reduce.

The staff know the young people well and the particular risks that they may face. The staff creatively highlight the consequences of poor decisions. As well as lots of information displayed around the home and discussions at the home, the staff arrange opportunities for the young people to attend cessation conferences and mentoring programmes.

The staff undertake individual risk assessments for each young person and develop personalised risk management plans. These risk assessments are appropriately shared with partner agencies. This promotes effective multi-agency collaborative working arrangements.

The staff understand that young people use behaviour as a means of communication.

The staff seek to understand and anticipate each of the young people's needs. The staff help them to identify what they are feeling and explore why. The young people are helped to develop appropriate emotional language to express their thoughts, wishes and feelings. One young person said, 'I accomplished a lot during my stay. My maturity and willingness to listen and connect improved.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is an active member of the care team. He has high aspirations for the young people and leads the team in a highly child-focused way. He believes that a well-supported and competent staff team is the foundation of effective residential childcare. The manager consistently demonstrates this commitment in practice, ensuring that his team is enthusiastic and that the staff work well together. The staff described him as a strong mentor. The staff enjoy their work and this shines through.

Partnership working with professionals and families is highly effective and promotes the young people's well-being. The staff challenge other agencies on behalf of the young people. Partner professionals and parents are consistently highly complimentary about the service.

The modelling of good staff care by the manager ensures that the staff are clear about the expectations of them. Consequently, the staff are individually highly motivated and child-focused. They deliver high-quality nurturing care and support which makes a significant difference to the young people. The meaningful child-focused relationships underpin the staff's success in helping the majority of the young people to feel valued and loved. The home quickly makes a difference for these young people.

The staff benefit from a range of relevant professional awareness raising training that promotes their confidence and competence. There have been difficulties with training providers, therefore some staff who have worked towards a relevant level 3 diploma in residential childcare within the time frame are yet to complete it.

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: SC462951

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: ERA Care Limited 5921904

Registered provider address: Unit G22 Allen House, Station Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9JX

Responsible individual: Stephen Milton

Registered manager: Thomas Rainey

Inspector

Joanna Heller, social care inspector

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