

1227869

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children aged seven to 17. Children may have experienced trauma and placement and family breakdown.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2016.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 December 2019

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: 12 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2018	Full	Good
21/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/05/2017	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and kept under regular review.
(‘Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.10)
This is in specific reference to the bedroom door alarm system fitted in the home and ensuring that this can be set to individual rooms depending on the needs of children.
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them.
(‘Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)
This is in specific reference to ensuring that explanations for gaps in employment are fully documented.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive exceptional care from staff who are passionate about them and committed to understanding their individual needs. As a result, children make significant progress from their starting points in different aspects of their development, including their health, education, behaviour and self-esteem.

Children experience excellent continuity of care from staff. No members of staff have left the home in the last year. Consequently, children settle well, develop trusting relationships with staff and have a strong sense of belonging in the home. For some children who previously experienced multiple placement moves, this is their first experience of stability in several years. For example, one child who has now lived here for nearly two years experienced 12 placement moves prior to her move here. All children have lived in the home since the last inspection.

Children enjoy the time that they spend with staff and develop very positive relationships with them. Children engage in a range of activities with staff and participate in their local community. Activities include swimming, theatre groups and horse riding. In the summer, children enjoyed a holiday to Spain with staff. For most, this was their first experience of overseas travel. Staff encourage children to develop new interests. For example, one

child has developed an interest in photography and has been selected as a finalist in a national wildlife photographic competition. As a consequence, improvements in children's confidence and self-esteem are very evident.

Staff work closely with children to help them understand their behaviour. Staff effectively use skills and knowledge acquired from training. As a result, children become more self-aware and able to make significant changes to their lives. Incidents of damage to the home have significantly reduced, as children are supported to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour.

Children are supported to contribute their thoughts and ideas in daily debriefs and weekly meetings with staff. Children engage well in key-work sessions with staff. These sessions focus on identifying and prioritising areas of need and risk, based on ongoing assessment and review. Consequently, staff help children to improve their behaviour and discuss any worries.

All children are in full-time education. Staff have successfully supported children to return to full-time school. Staff help children to address any issues that arise in school. This approach enables children to overcome any barriers to learning, so that academic success can be achieved. This has resulted in two of the children receiving school awards for significantly improved progress over the last academic year.

Children access all health services to meet their physical and emotional health needs. When children have complex health needs, staff work in partnership with specialist health professionals, such as bespoke hospital teams and children's mental health services. As a result, children receive high-quality, tailored healthcare that supports their development and promotes their well-being.

Children learn skills they require to become independent and progress into adulthood. They take responsibility for tasks around the home. As they become older, they learn to budget, shop and cook.

The home environment is exceptionally warm and cosy, with photographs displaying shared activities and memories of the children's life in the home. There is a range of pets living there which contribute to the homely feel. Children take pride in their bedrooms, enjoy their own personal space and have an array of personal possessions.

Children reported that they feel cared about and that they have close relationships with staff. They believe that staff listen to them, want the best for them and will advocate on their behalf. One child scored the staff 11 out of 10 for how much they liked living there. Parents similarly feel that the staff are doing an exceptionally good job in caring for their children.

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

Children are settled. They stated that they are happy and feel safe living in the home. Children who have previously displayed extremely complex and challenging behaviour

are developing positive relationships with staff. They understand and are accepting of the boundaries that are placed around them to keep them safe. This contributes to a feeling of well-being and security for children.

Children rarely go missing from the home. Since the last inspection, incidents that have required staff to hold or restrain children have reduced significantly. This is a significant improvement and demonstrates the sustained progress children have made in managing their own behaviour.

The manager consistently reviews and updates all risk assessments. This ensures that they are live documents that accurately reflect the risks children face. Risks for children are understood by staff and well documented. Their risk assessments identify specific actions for staff to manage and reduce their risks. Staff are highly vigilant and work hard to ensure children's safety.

The close and trusting relationships between staff and children allow children to share their worries and concerns with staff, and this contributes to children's feelings of safety. This also contributes to a reduction in children's risk-taking behaviours, because children turn to staff for help, in the knowledge that staff will listen to and act on their concerns. Staff focus on praising and rewarding positive behaviour, which motivates children to respect rules and boundaries and keep themselves safe. Sanctions are rarely used, and when they are, these are appropriate and proportionate.

Staff receive a wide range of training to enable them to be able to keep children safe. This is supplemented by team meeting workshops, where staff review and discuss particular issues. Good training and regular staff discussions ensure that staff fully understand the risks children face and can respond effectively when concerns arise.

On the one occasion that a child raised a concern, the manager took swift action. Learning was identified and implemented and the relationship between the member of staff and the child was repaired. When concerns arise, the manager contacts all relevant agencies and takes the actions needed to keep children safe.

Children benefit from living in a safe environment where health and safety is given a high priority. However, the universal use of bedroom door alarms is not specific to individual children's needs. Furthermore, it does not contribute to a homely environment or enhance a sense of belonging for children. Safer recruitment practice ensures that adults employed to work at the home do not pose a risk to children. However, on one occasion the manager has failed to ensure that explanations of employment gaps were clearly recorded.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is passionate and inspirational. She evaluates the quality of care provided, to ensure that every child is making progress and that the care provided makes a positive difference to children's lives. Her enthusiasm influences the staff, who share her passion and drive for achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

The manager has an excellent knowledge of each child and can clearly articulate the progress that they have made since they came to live at the home. She fully understands the local authority plan for each child and ensures that children are supported to work towards their goals. When children are making good progress towards their plan, but the placing authority is slow in acting on the plan, she advocates strongly on the child's behalf. This promotes children's welfare.

The manager develops the staff's use of research-based practice to drive continuous improvement and to help them to fully understand each child's individualised needs. For example, following training, the home has changed the way its staff communicate with children, to allow them to work in a reflective way. This has helped staff to support children to reflect on their behaviour and achieve their goals.

The staff team is stable. Those staff who are unqualified are in the regulatory period to obtain their qualification. They benefit from monthly workshops and their progress is actively monitored by the manager to ensure their timely completion. There is a thorough induction process in place for new staff and an extensive ongoing training package for staff who are employed to work in the home. External training that is specific to the children in the home is sourced appropriately. Staff also receive regular and highly effective supervision, which enables staff to reflect on their practice and development.

Relationships with external agencies are excellent. Staff were observed to be in constant contact with other professionals throughout the inspection. All professionals spoke highly of the manager and her work in helping children to achieve better outcomes.

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: 1227869

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: Rebecca Linden

Inspector

Anne Daly, social care inspector

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