

# 1236532

Registered provider: Calcot Services for Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to five children with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, complex needs and behavioural difficulties who are unable to live with their families. The home was formerly registered to provide care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Ofsted registered the manager in November 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 10 to 11 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:** 27 February 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
27/02/2019	Full	Good
13/02/2018	Full	Good
11/01/2017	Full	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>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(c)).</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the timing of and number of restraints used in a single episode are clear and that children’s views are sought about the measure used as well as their reflections on their behaviour.</p>	<p>31/01/2020</p>

### Recommendations

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise, have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 24, paragraph 4.24) Ensure that this includes children being supported to make a complaint, and that it is dealt with in accordance with regulation 39.
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the general principles for behaviour management in children’s homes are respected. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality

standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36) Ensure that when the home's manager has implemented such a measure, a senior manager monitors its use.

- Case records must be kept up to date, signed, and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

## Inspection judgements

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

A member of staff commented that 'morale is positive and we have energy'. This is evident in the efforts staff put into understanding each child's needs and having a positive impact on their quality of life. This contributes to the fact that children who have had several placement breakdowns have quickly settled here.

Staff use body language and facial expressions to interpret children's wishes and feelings and infer their likes and dislikes. The staff have had training in the use of communication aids, which allows them to convey messages and involve children in decision-making. The manager and staff respond to the children's requests promptly whenever possible.

The children's guide is produced in an accessible format. The guide contains exceptionally clear and succinct descriptions of, for example, the care children can expect while living in the home and the role of the children's commissioner.

There is a strong ethos of helping children to contribute to the wider agency network too, including local authority children in care councils, the provider's own children's consultation group and support for a child to attend a national advocacy group for children in care. This means children can see that their views and ideas are important.

Staff strive to improve children's communication and independence skills and their involvement in the wider community. They are enthusiastic in helping children become as independent as possible, even if children show some resistance. This will best prepare children for life as adults and give them the greatest autonomy.

Staff introduce children to new activities, encouraging those who are at first reluctant to 'give it a go'. The result is that children widen their experiences and overall enjoyment of life.

Children make progress across all areas of development from the point of admission, especially in self-care, communication and education. Support for education is very strong in the home. For example, the manager and a key worker drew up a daily educational timetable, with notes for how to work with a child who could not be in school. This included activities in the home to improve his counting and handwriting and at a 'discovery centre' to engage him in making observations of the natural world. This was in addition to a daily tutor.

One professional was so impressed by the home that she described it as 'amazing', adding that 'it seems everyone there is just made for my boy – the way they talk about him and look after him'. The high standard of individualised, diligently considered care for children makes this a justifiable accolade.

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

The manager and staff have worked extensively to improve their administration of medication, which has resulted in a culture of paying meticulous attention to safe practice and precise recording. As a result, errors are minimal.

The manager acted in response to recommendations from a fire risk assessment and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to ensure that children are able to reach

safety in the event of a fire. Staff are well versed in the home's safeguarding procedures, including what to do if they think action to protect children is not sufficient. The implementation of such policies and procedures is keeping children safe.

The practice in the home is to improve children's behaviour through praise and rewards and to explain to them why negative behaviour is not acceptable rather than use sanctions. This is effective with most children, and behaviours that have challenged staff or family members in other settings have significantly reduced in this home. Clear and consistent boundaries contribute to the calm and stable atmosphere.

Staff anticipate children's needs to help them manage difficult situations. However, physical interventions are relatively frequent for some children, mostly to guide or redirect. The manager considers each incident so that the team can learn lessons from them, where appropriate. However, this includes monitoring measures he has been involved in, so no one else has had oversight of his practice. Recording is generally of a high standard but there are examples of discrepancies in the number of holds used in an episode and timings.

The manager or another member of staff speaks to the child after a physical intervention, but they do not routinely ask for the child's views about the measure itself, for example whether they understood why staff held them and if they thought it was fair. An opportunity to adjust practice as a result a child's feedback is therefore missed.

Staff amend children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans in the light of events or changes in circumstances. For example, staff made assessments of a child's vulnerability to child sexual exploitation and radicalisation at the start of her having independent time in the community. This contributed to both the staff and the child being aware of potential risks and what to do to avoid them.

Frequent key-work sessions address a wide variety of topics, including keeping safe, at a level appropriate to the child. Staff's creative use of resources such as social stories and selected online videos successfully contributes to children's understanding.

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

The manager and his deputy have been in post for just a few months but have had a significant impact on the running of the home. Senior managers, staff and parents are very positive about their approach. For example, a staff member said, 'The new management team in place really care and they push the home forward', and a parent said, 'In a short space of time the manager has done a really good job. I can see that all the children are more content.'

Senior managers provide helpful guidance and oversight that are successful in promoting improvement. They and the registered manager have high ambitions for the home and for the children who live here. This permeates the staff with a shared vision for what they need to do to improve children's lives. The responsible individual, manager and staff members all spoke independently of a personal aspiration to see children more involved in the community. There is considerable evidence that this is being realised.

Effective supervision and training, which develop the staff team's skills and confidence in working with the children, contribute to the supportive environment for staff and the increased morale that they report. The improvement in skills is evident in the evolving

quality of key-work sessions and recording of incidents since the last inspection. The provider is keen to invest in its staff and is, for example, funding Level 4 training for those ready to undertake it.

The home uses an electronic recording and filing system, but a number of difficulties were encountered in its use during the inspection, such as attachments that could not be downloaded, difficulty in identifying which records were about particular issues and some documents not being uploaded to the system. In addition, several documents did not make clear who had written them and/or were undated.

Leaders and managers have made good use of regulation 44 reports. For example, they have taken forward the independent person's suggestions to improve communication with family members by use of an app to easily convey children's experiences through sharing photographs.

## **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:** 1236532

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

**Registered provider:** Calcot Services for Children Limited

**Registered provider address:** 8 Brewery Court, Theale, Reading, Berkshire RG7 5AJ

**Responsible individual:** Rachel Redgwell

**Registered manager:** Martin Honour

## Inspector

Chris Peel, social care inspector



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