

SC011185

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 seven young people. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for young people with complex emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The home provides a therapeutic approach to care, which can include psychotherapy, art, drama and music therapy.

The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2018.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 11 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/09/2018	Full	Good
12/09/2017	Full	Good
08/02/2017	Full	Good
07/07/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- 7.17 – Managing medicines in care homes (March 2014) in particular review use of MAR sheets – make sure there is a clear space to record where a dose is not administered by staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children flourish in this home. The team around each child helps them to make progress in all areas of their lives. Care is specific to each child and clear assessments from the beginning enable a good understanding of their needs. Children say that they are happy with the care and support they receive, and one child said, 'I like it here. They help me.'

Children benefit from a stable staff group that understands the importance of positive relationships. The therapeutic ethos and manner of working helps children to develop trusting relationships with staff. This helps them to confidently approach staff with any concerns that they might have. It also helps them to feel confident that their needs are central and their progression is important to everyone who works with them.

The therapeutic ethos extends to pet therapy where there is recognition of the benefits that caring for animals can bring. Children enjoy the presence of the house dog who is part of the life of each child. They learn to heal emotionally from the daily interactions, which helps them to learn to trust and care for others.

Staff understand the importance of children's voices being heard. Because of this, children feel able to express their views and ideas for making the home a consistently positive place to live. They are involved in the Calcot council and are encouraged to join their local authorities' children's council. Children are involved in charitable activities. The children run house meetings and are confident in calling additional meetings outside of the schedule. Children are involved in the recruitment of staff and new applicants must complete a questionnaire devised by the children.

Staff promote the importance of education. Most children attend school. When they do not, they receive consistent and structured tuition until a suitable educational facility is found. The progress of one child is remarkable, increasing their poor attendance before moving to this home to that which is now close to the expected range. When another child was without an educational placement for some time, staff advocated on their behalf enabling the child to trust in the commitment of others to ensure that all their needs are met.

Children develop a wide range of interests. A dedicated staff team supports them to experience a range of activities such as bowling and charitable events. They take part in cinema and games nights as any family would. Children have pets such as rabbits and hamsters, and they are expected to take responsibility for their care.

Children are well prepared for moving on and staff are committed to helping all children to develop independence skills. Children are supported to manage money, cook and make healthy eating choices. One young person who recently moved on said that staff who were on their days off came in to help him move. Children were also involved in his move.

Staff recognise the value of continued family relationships and children are supported in having time with family and those who are important to them. One relative said that he feels welcomed when he visits and is impressed by the way that staff help him to maintain his relationship with his family member.

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

Children's safety and well-being is at the centre of all practice in this home. All children have detailed and up-to-date risk assessments that address all their needs. The first 28 day 1:1 supervision of new children helps to identify their needs, risks and how their needs can best be met. Clear behaviour management plans are in place and all staff know how to work with each child.

Excellent missing from care protocols and consistent return home interviews help children to feel increasingly safe. There is significant joint working with local agencies, including the police. Incidents of children going missing have decreased. When children do go missing, staff are persistent in ensuring their safe return and employ strategies that you would expect of any parent, for example looking for them. There has been a decrease in the criminalisation of children due to close working and clear protocols with the police. The incidents of self-harm have decreased significantly as staff continue to work with skill, knowledge and patience.

Clear and consistent boundaries contribute to a feeling of well-being and security for children in this home. Any incident is skilfully managed and reviewed by staff, most of whom are therapeutically trained. Children are involved in this process and are active in their care and placement plan. Children say that they feel safe.

Incidents of physical intervention have decreased because of positive relationships and clear boundaries. Excellent debriefs with staff and children promote learning.

Children are supported to keep themselves safe online and have discussions and activities in their key-work sessions to ensure their understanding. A significant amount of work has been done with the children around bullying and its effects. This is revisited intermittently to ensure continued learning.

Staff training in the management of behaviour is of a high quality. The consistency of this training with regular refresher sessions has developed a staff team whose members are confident in their knowledge of how to keep children safe.

Children are cared for by an experienced staff team whose members are committed to meeting all their needs. Staff ably support children with their health needs and administer medication as appropriate. There is limited space on charts to record where a dose has not been administered by staff and while this has not impacted any child in the home a review of this process would provide for more effective medication management.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager shows an excellent understanding of the needs of all the children. She has ensured strong processes are in place to check the progress of each child. These range from progress reviews to monthly reports which track children's progress. These are sent to the child's social worker.

The manager has high expectations for each child and confidently takes effective action where shortcomings in services are found.

The manager closely tracks the progress of children. High expectations are consistent, and children are confident that their needs and development is central to the work here. The manager has supported the work experience of a child, which has resulted in him being invited to return on several occasions. This has served to prepare him for employment in addition to boosting his confidence.

Staff feel helped and supported with their learning and development. The workforce development plan is exceptional, and staff are invested in their continued development. Consequently, they have the skills and knowledge to provide excellent standards of care.

Staff supervision and appraisals are of a high standard. In addition, staff induction and probation are thorough and follow a consistent process.

Leaders and managers work effectively with a wide range of local partners to ensure that information about the safety of the area is well known and shared. The local area assessment is regularly updated and is understood and applied by the staff team. The manager attends the local missing and child sexual exploitation forum monthly. The police have visited the home to see how it works and to share good practice with other local homes that have a high number of incidents of children going missing.

The manager and staff are committed to children's involvement in the development of the home. Their opinions are gathered in a range of ways. These include questionnaires for the twice-yearly service review, key-worker sessions, house meetings and review of questionnaires completed by newly recruited staff. This enables children to feel invested in the continued growth and development of their environment.

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: SC011185

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: Cassandra Venn

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad: social care inspector

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