

1244117

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides residential care and accommodation for up to five children aged five to 16 years. It offers placements to children or young people in need of support with a range of emotional, behavioural and/or social difficulties. In some circumstances, young people may stay up to the age of 18; this will be dependent on their individual needs and in line with an agreed transition plan.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2019.

Visit dates: 20 to 21 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 19 August 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Requires improvement to be good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

During the COVID-19 pandemic, children continued with their education in the home. Staff worked in partnership with schools to provide fun, hands-on learning. The manager works with other agencies to make sure that children have the right educational support. Where appropriate, she challenges other agencies to make this happen.

Children are fully involved in making decisions about how the house is decorated. The house is welcoming and homely. Bedrooms are personalised and full of toys. There are plenty of in-house activities, such as pool and air hockey, for the children to participate in.

Staff and children have trusting relationships, and the staff know the children very well. They use the children's interests to engage them and build relationships. Children are making good progress. One professional said, 'They are committed to him [Name of child] and invested in him.'

Children have kept in contact with families and friends during the pandemic. The home used a variety of different technologies to support this.

The safety of children

Staff set clear boundaries and have high expectations for the children. Staff know and understand the needs of the children very well. Regular team discussions about the children help staff respond to the children in a consistent, warm manner. One professional said, 'They get him [Name of child].'

Staff manage behaviours very well. One professional said, 'They don't just report the incident but ask questions around it and take steps to answer them.' This reflective, enquiring practice has meant that incidents of restraint have significantly reduced.

Children are kept safe as staff understand how and when to report concerns or allegations. These are clearly documented, and appropriate action is taken.

Risk assessments and behaviour support plans are detailed and reviewed following any incidents or changes in behaviour. Key-work sessions show that there are appropriate conversations about keeping safe, for example to explain how to keep safe online.

Leaders and managers

The operation of this home has significantly improved due to the strong leadership of the registered manager. The manager and the staff team meet regularly to review the progress that children make. A child psychotherapist leads the meetings and open discussion is encouraged. This means that the staff have a better understanding of the children's needs and how to support them.

Staff report feeling well supervised and supported in their roles. Supervision is described by staff as being really helpful. The manager and deputy manager are seen by staff as good role models. One staff member said that 'communication is amazing' and 'the manager is really supportive'.

Transitions of children into the home are well planned and take the needs of the other children into account. A third child has recently moved in. He has settled very well and there has been little impact on the other children. The social worker of the child that has just moved in said, 'I couldn't sing their praises more.'

The manager works very well with other agencies and communicates well. Feedback from involved agencies is overwhelmingly positive. Professionals feel that children are well cared for and safe.

All the requirements from the full inspection on 19 August 2019 have been met.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1244117

Registered provider: Caldecott Foundation Limited

Registered provider address: Caldecott House, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SP

Responsible individual: Nicholas Barnett

Registered manager: Rebecca Bush

Inspector

Alison Marshall, Social Care Inspector

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