

SC020133

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight young people. It provides short- to medium-term crisis placements. The home is owned by a private company. Education is provided on site at the organisation's own school. The home specialises in providing young people with outdoor adventure activities.

Visit dates: 28 to 29 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 5 June 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

Care and education staff work well together. When young people move into the home they are promptly enrolled at school or college. As a result, young people who have been out of education make quick progress.

Young people access outdoor-based education and activities. This can include mountain biking, walking, climbing and caving. They are encouraged to challenge themselves. Young people have opportunities to gain qualifications in these activities.

A key feature of this home is the rural setting, that allows easy access to adventurous activities. Young people benefit from being away from negative and risky influences. Young people have opportunities to reflect on previous experiences and develop strategies to become safer in the future.

Young people were helped to cope with the impact of COVID-19. Staff managed this well. Young people continued to enjoy some activities. They were also enabled to keep in touch with their families through the creative use of technology.

The safety of children

Young people quickly build good relationships with staff. They trust staff to act sensitively in meeting their health and care needs. This provides young people with a strong sense of safety and security.

Staff have continued to access training during COVID-19. This has included training on safeguarding and self-harmful behaviours. This ensures that staff understand the complex needs of young people and how to keep them safe.

Staff generally have a good understanding of the young people's vulnerabilities. However, staff do not consistently update risk assessments for young people. They do not always change strategies and learn from incidents. This means that, in some areas, young people's risk has not reduced.

Safeguarding records are not always clear. This means that opportunities have been missed to identify ways to improve practice.

Leaders and managers

The manager has a number of years' experience at this home. She works well with her experienced and established deputy manager. The managers are well supported by the responsible individual.

Managers can evidence substantial improvement since the last inspection. The home has benefited from major refurbishment. This means that young people now have access to an environment that meets their needs and is both homely and welcoming.

Managers work closely and effectively with partner agencies. They have strong links with local schools, colleges and work placements. This ensures young people's education needs are addressed promptly from the point of admission.

Staff benefit from a dedicated training officer. The training officer works closely with leaders and managers. This ensures that staff training is tailored to the needs of young people.

Managers understand the benefits of an experienced, stable and consistent staff team in providing good-quality care for young people. A recruitment adviser leads on improving staff retention.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii))</p>	11/12/2020

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that is helpful to the child (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, Page 62, 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC020133

Registered provider: Arnfield Care Limited

Responsible individual: Wayne Relf

Registered manager: Elaine French

Inspector

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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