

1234317

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides short- to medium-term placements for up to six children aged 11 to 17 years. The children may have experienced trauma and exploitation, and may also have emotional, social and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager has been at the home since January 2021. The previous registered manager left the home in January 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting in February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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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	good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 3 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2020	Full	Inadequate
03/05/2018	Full	Good
24/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The care and support children receive are not yet good enough. Children have high levels of supervision and regular, good-quality key-work sessions provided by staff. However, children's engagement and progress vary, and they often leave the home in an unplanned way. This does not enhance their future prospects.

Children do not have in place a school or education provision. In-house tutoring has been provided at the home. However, children rarely take part in the learning on offer. Staff are unable to help children to overcome their barriers to education. This is having a detrimental impact on the children's outcomes and limits their opportunities for further education, training or employment.

Children are healthy. On arrival at the home, they are registered with the local health services. Staff have also established links with specialist health support, such as the local substance misuse service, should children need or want this help.

Children are provided with specialist help from the clinical team and the in-house therapeutic programme. Children's engagement in the weekly sessions varies, which limits the progress they make while living at the home.

Children speak positively about staff. They enjoy spending time with them and are able to relax in their company at the home. Their positive relationships with staff help children to have an increased sense of safety. One child said, 'If there is something wrong, they will sit down and speak with you; they talk to everyone in the same way.'

Children are supported to have meaningful family time. Staff support children to see their families so that they can sustain relationships with those who are most important to them. Family time occurs at the home, in the local community and in the children's own home area. This supports the children to maintain their sense of identity.

Children can engage in a wide variety of activities. Staff know their hobbies and interests and enable children to access activities such as fishing, playing football, boxing and go-karting. Taking part in activities during the week is dependent on children attending education.

Children have in place daily routines and boundaries. However, staff struggle to consistently support children to engage throughout the day. This does not help children to access the support available to them and may impact on their future opportunities, beyond living at the home.

The manager is striving forward to improve the living environment for the children. There is an ongoing programme of maintenance and repair. The main parts of the building and the bedrooms are well decorated. However, the outside of the property needs some attention, including the rear porch, which looks dilapidated. This does not enhance the living experience of the children.

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

The location of the home and high levels of staff supervision help to reduce the risk of harm for children. Previous concerns, such as gang affiliation, criminality, exploitation and substance misuse, have ceased. Staff are helping children to recognise the dangers associated with their previous experiences.

Physical intervention in the home is rarely used. Children are supported to explore alternative coping strategies when faced with difficult emotions. Because the staff are knowledgeable about the children's emotional vulnerabilities, they are able to de-escalate conflict and help children to understand their feelings.

The manager and staff are supporting children to understand the impact their behaviour can have on others. Staff respond to incidents of bullying by talking with the children to help them reflect on their actions. This approach is helping children to develop self-awareness and to feel safe living at the home.

There is a well-coordinated response from staff when children go missing from the home. When children do go missing, staff work with the police to return the children to the home. The manager has in place a detailed risk assessment to assess whether children are suitably matched to live together. This has resulted in a reduction in incidents of children going missing from the home.

Staff help children to create their own safety plans. Staff enable children to explore and recognise what additional measures they need to take to help keep themselves safe. This also enhances the staff's ability to reduce the risk of harm for children when a behaviour of concern has been identified.

Allegations are handled quickly and effectively. Appropriate action is taken to ensure that children are better protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The newly appointed manager has improved the standards of professional practice within the staff team. She has a good understanding of the children and the progress they make. The manager is committed to ensuring that children have the best experience and opportunities while living at the home.

The manager provides a supportive environment for staff to learn the skills needed to care for the children. Staff have regular supervision and training to help them develop their knowledge. Staff value the positive impact the new manager has made. One staff member said, 'The manager is very supportive.'

A senior staff member from another home who is providing support has not had formal supervision since joining the team. This limits the positive influence the staff member can have in her role.

Children's case records are well organised and completed to a good standard. The key-work sessions provide children with a reflective account of the care they receive from staff. The style and clarity of recordings mean that children have an increased understanding about their time living in the home.

The manager responds to complaints effectively. For example, when a parent raised concerns about the cleanliness of the home, the manager put in place an action plan to improve the living environment for the children. The manager is in regular communication with parents and social workers, which is helping to improve the planning of the children's care.

When children have left the home at short notice, the manager has worked in partnership with the local authorities to minimise the negative impact this can have on children.

The manager monitors the quality of care provided to children. However, consultation with the children is not included as part of this process. Without the voice of the child being at the centre of the manager's development plan, the progress that children make may be limited.

The manager's assessment of the home's location has not considered the local community or surrounding area of the home. This limits the manager's ability to fully evaluate the risk of harm that children may be exposed to, in relation to their needs.

The quality of care review in respect of this home would be more informative if the views of others in contact with the home were regularly sought.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(v)(vi))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure that the service provided to children enhances children's prospects when they move on from the home, in line with the home's statement of purpose.</p>	24 June 2021
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p>	24 June 2021

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;</p> <p>help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment;</p> <p>help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(ix)(x))</p> <p>In particular, the registered provider and the registered manager must ensure that they help children to overcome their barriers to learning, and that they support children to attend an education provision in line with each child’s care plan.</p>	
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p>	<p>24 June 2021</p>

<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2(b)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children’s home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that, as part of the location assessment, the local community and surrounding areas of the home are assessed to help evaluate any level of risk for children.</p>	<p>24 June 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that the home provides a homely and domestic environment for children. This includes ensuring that the outside of the property is maintained to a high standard, including the rear porch. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of the information from internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. The manager must ensure that they gather the views of parents, social workers, health and education professionals and any other people significant in the children’s lives. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). This refers to the manager ensuring that all staff are supervised in line with the

supervision policy. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1234317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children Residential Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Amy Moulton

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Aaron Mcloughlin, Social Care Inspector

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