

SC436826

Registered provider: CASC (BARROW) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children of either gender and is operated by a private provider.

A suitably qualified and experienced manager oversees this home. The manager was registered by Ofsted in November 2017.

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 on 18 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 July 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	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 provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2020	Full	Good
22/01/2019	Full	Good
16/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
16/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care in this home. They feel well cared for and have positive relationships with those who support them. These relationships provide children with a caring and supportive environment which helps them to make progress.

The home in which children live is spacious and comfortable. However, improvements are needed to ensure that the physical environment is homely, personalised and free from damage so that it does not appear institutionalised. It is further recommended that any unnecessary restrictions that prevent children accessing all communal areas in the home are reviewed.

Children have access to education. Incentives and rewards are used appropriately to support children to attend and engage. When children refuse to engage in formal learning, staff help them to uphold routines through informal learning and physical activities. This supports children to continue to achieve and have beneficial, positive experiences.

Children are generally in good health and their needs are being met. Where there are areas for improvement, these are identified within children's plans. Staff seek and access specialist help and advice when there are concerns for children's mental and emotional health. This helps to improve children's well-being and overall safety.

Children are helped and supported to have positive time with their families and those important to them. Children are also building and maintaining relationships with peers. This provides children with positive networks outside of the home which will benefit them in the future.

Staff have not always managed children's behaviours effectively and this has resulted in police assistance being required. This has been due to an escalation in challenging behaviours displayed by children when living with others. Subsequently, some children's placements have broken down and resulted in them moving from the home in an unplanned way. This does not provide children with positive experiences and is not representative of good care planning.

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

There are some risks posed to children as a result of the home's environment. Window restrictors in children's bedrooms are easily broken. This does not protect children from potential hazards. Furthermore, required actions detailed in fire risk assessments have not been completed. This does not provide children with a safe environment that meets the necessary standards. Once highlighted, steps were taken at the time of the inspection to begin to address these concerns.

Incidents where children have been missing from home have been frequent. Comprehensive procedures are in place for staff to follow in the event of these incidents. Staff are familiar with these procedures and follow them. As a result, children are generally not away from home for long periods of time and return safe and well. This helps to minimise the risks posed to children and improves their safety.

When children have expressed low mood and threats to harm themselves, staff have acted quickly. Appropriate medical advice and guidance has been sought. Robust safety plans have been drawn up in consultation with relevant professionals. These measures have protected children and minimised future potential risks.

Children say that they are safe in the home. Sanctions and rewards are used appropriately to support children to reduce unsafe and challenging behaviours. Furthermore, staff and managers ensure children receive direct work and consultation following incidents. This helps children to understand their behaviours, thoughts and feelings, and serves to reinforce positive and safe behaviours.

Incidents of restrictive physical intervention are clearly recorded and are shared with relevant professionals. Physical intervention has been used by staff as a last resort and has been of minimal duration and force. Holds used have been supportive and have prevented injury and improved children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a strong and effective leader who is suitably experienced and qualified to oversee this home. She manages the home well and maintains positive relationships with both staff and children.

There are shortfalls in the recruitment processes used in the home. Not all gaps in employees' employment histories have been explored or accounted for. This means that not all the required information has been sought to ensure staff are suitable to work in the home. This reduces children's safety and has the potential to have an impact on their welfare.

The manager has been proactive in seeking the support of external professionals, agencies and services. Local police and the youth offending team have recently attended the home to provide support and guidance. This multi-agency approach helps staff to manage incidents more effectively and provides those in the home with increased knowledge and awareness about the criminal justice system and police procedures.

The registered manager ensures the team receives robust training. In addition to mandatory training, the manager holds frequent training days and 'reflection sessions'. These sessions help staff to understand the current procedures in place to manage children's risk-taking and challenging behaviours and to consider alternative, more effective strategies. This means staff are better informed and have improved confidence to manage incidents that may occur in the home.

Staff describe the support they receive from the manager as 'incredible'. They receive regular support from her in the form of training, debriefs and supervision and believe this helps them to improve their practice and deliver better care to children living in the home.

Complaints have been received by those living in the local community. This is due to the behaviour of children living in the home. While behaviours are low level, this is having a big impact on those living near the home. The manager and staff are working hard to defuse this in the most appropriate way to ensure community relationships are maintained while appropriately responding to the behaviours displayed by children with complex needs.

The manager identifies and acts upon weaknesses in the home and staff practice, particularly those relating to staff's behaviour management skills. She is proactive in addressing these and supports staff to reflect and improve. Furthermore, appropriate action is taken to make any necessary improvements arising from internal and external monitoring. As such, appropriate steps to meet the requirement and recommendation made at the last inspection have also been taken.

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, the 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—</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure window restrictors protect children from any risks to their safety or welfare. Furthermore, ensure appropriate action is taken to address actions outlined in fire risk assessments.</p>	21 August 2021
<p>The care planning standard is that the children—</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(b) (2)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, that staff are able to meet the needs of children living in and/or moving into the home.</p>	21 August 2021
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p>	21 August 2021

<p>employ an individual to work at the children's home</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure gaps in previous employment are explored and accounted for.</p>	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children can access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet their needs. Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: SC436826

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: CASC (BARROW) Limited

Registered provider address: Office 2, Unit 2, T Brady's Yard, Walney Road,
Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 5UT

Responsible individual: Hilary Southward

Registered manager: Carly Holland

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, 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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