

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 children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it provides care for children 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 has been registered since March 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.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 July 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 28 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
11/09/2018	Full	Good
12/09/2017	Full	Good
08/02/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children live in a home where they receive individualised care from staff. Staff are fully committed to supporting them to develop and successfully manage any challenges they experience. This mostly involves supporting children to develop skills which will help them in adult life. Children have made significant progress and have excellent experiences within the home. Children demonstrate their appreciation of the care provided to them by staff and speak fondly of them.

Staff are very proud of their children. They celebrate every achievement children have, which helps children to feel positive about themselves. This enhances children's self-esteem. As a result, they are more confident and readily share their wishes and feelings. For example, children confidently requested a meeting at the inspection, during which they discussed their experiences prior to being in care and the progress they have made. Professionals and families also speak positively about the care provided by staff, and children's progress.

Educational attendance and progress are excellent. A parent said that their child struggled with education before, but now attends school every day. Another child who previously struggled now aspires to complete A levels.

Children's emotional health has been significantly improved. There has been a reduction in serious incidents. Children develop the ability to self-regulate their emotions as a result of the high-quality support by staff, who implement the PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) model of practice. Children have access to mental health practitioners, including private therapy, and dog therapy is provided for children where this best meets their needs. Children's general health is carefully monitored by exceptionally well-trained staff and appropriate health practitioners.

Children are supported to access a variety of activities such as fishing, swimming, accessing the local cinemas and going away on holidays. Children can enjoy these with or without staff support. This helps them to develop confidence and awareness of their surroundings, and consequently their social and emotional development is enhanced.

Children have been supported to develop a sense of caring and giving through taking part in charity work within their community. Staff and children donate to the local food bank, have baked cupcakes, donated the proceeds to vulnerable children and supported local key workers such as bus, train and elderly care workers in the local community. This has given children a sense of belonging and self-worth in the community they are living in.

The level of attention given to children moving in and out of the home is outstanding. Children are provided with choice and their views are carefully considered in any decisions. A clearly planned matching process is undertaken, followed by thoughtful transitions into the home. Children already living in the home support new children to help them feel welcome.

Staff help children to develop a wide range of skills that they will require in adult life, including a summer holiday programme. Children are encouraged to complete a weekly food shop, go fishing, complete bike repair work in the homes workshop, clean the car and care for the rabbit. Consequently, children develop practical skills and experiences which prepare them well for the next stage in their life.

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

Children are supported to stay safe because staff consistently implement and review high-quality risk assessments specific to children's individual needs. Staff are trained in keeping children safe and apply their excellent knowledge and understanding of safeguarding to keep children safe and reduce risks.

No children have gone missing from the home since the last visit. Children feel safe due to the actions and approaches used by staff. Staff successfully use their communication skills to talk to children about potential harm. Children spend time alone in the community while maintaining contact with staff, who show that they care. This builds children's confidence and provides them with a sense of belonging.

Staff have supported children very well to understand the risks associated with social media. Staff make effective use of keywork sessions and meetings to help children understand how to keep themselves safe. Children talked to the inspector about how they keep safe.

Children are helped to explore their feelings and express themselves safely and positively. With the support of staff and positive behaviour strategies, children are being helped to manage their frustrations and this is improving behaviour.

Strong recruitment procedures ensure that only those adults who are suitable work in the home are able to do so. Children are involved in the recruitment processes through capturing and sharing their interview questions. As a result, children have a say in who cares for them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager knows the children very well and is clearly an important figure in their daily lives. She passionately promotes opportunities for the children and takes pride in their achievements.

The manager is highly ambitious for children and promotes high standards of care and educational achievement. She inspires her staff. As a result, the home has a highly motivated team who enjoy working with their children.

Staff ensure that every child has a detailed plan that captures their individual needs. The manager prioritises one-to-one catch-up meetings with children to ensure that they fully contribute to their activities and plans. This gives children a sense of security and motivates them to work towards goals that they themselves have been involved in setting.

Monitoring systems which help leaders to track and review progress are exceptional. All documents and plans are reviewed by leaders at regular and frequent intervals, which provides the manager with excellent oversight of practice and progress. This internal monitoring is complemented by thorough and timely reports from the independent visitor, and regular quality assurance tasks are completed by the responsible individual.

Staff and managers receive regular and effective supervisions. These are supplemented with monthly staff meetings and both focus on individual and group practice, policies and development. These meetings are extremely child-focused and are an opportunity to explore children's complex needs in a more detailed way. Staff appreciate the high level of support they receive. It helps them to deliver excellent care to children and helps to progress their own learning and development.

The registered manager shares a positive and respectful relationship with external agencies. She is not afraid to challenge other organisations when children's needs are not met. For example, she has advocated for a child whose placement was ending prematurely. The manager runs a home that is characterised by high expectations for children, and this is making a significant, positive difference to their lives.

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: SC011185

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Calcot Services for Children Limited

Registered provider address: Advantage, 87 Castle Street, Reading, Berkshire
RG1 7SN

Responsible individual: Robin Ward

Registered manager: Johanna Meertens

Inspector

Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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