

SC010090

Registered provider: Partners in Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It may provide care for up to four children, irrespective of gender.

The home is overseen by a suitably qualified manager who was granted registration in July 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: 24 to 25 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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: 26 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2019	Full	Outstanding
04/07/2018	Full	Good
22/08/2017	Full	Good
08/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living in this home have specific and complex needs. The individualised, high-quality care provided ensures that children are making exceptional progress and are having improved, positive experiences.

Staff show children genuine concern, warmth and affection. They know the children well and are aware of their individual needs. Because of this, children have formed strong, positive relationships with the adults who care for them, and they are happy and enjoy living in the home.

Children are healthy. They attend all appointments. Health assessments show that children's needs are understood, and are responded to and met effectively. Children receive personalised therapy to support them with their complex emotional and mental health needs. This helps children to process their previous experiences and develop the necessary resilience and coping skills.

Children are achieving academically. Most children have progressed to attending mainstream schools and have excellent attendance levels. Where children require additional support, they have access to and engage in extra tuition and informal learning. Furthermore, the children's educational achievements are frequently rewarded and celebrated. This means that children are progressing in line with their peers, and have a wider range of opportunities to improve their quality of life, now and in the future.

Children have access to a variety of activities and are encouraged to pursue their hobbies and interests. Children attend clubs such as scouts, sea cadets, football, and drama. Children also enjoyed holidaying together in Wales when their organised trip to Barcelona was cancelled due to COVID-19. They enjoyed staying together in a tent and attending local tourist attractions such as Zip World, the beach and a nearby fairground. Children who prefer to spend time in the home enjoy pamper evenings, writing stories, and art and craft activities, and have also participated in a yoga session organised in the home.

Staff and managers ensure that children's daily lives and events are recorded in a child-friendly way. 'Journey books' are comprehensive. They include photographs and a detailed description of the child's day. When children move on from the home they will have an extensive collection of memories and information. This helps children with their identity and helps them to remember and understand their previous experiences.

Children have good relationships with those they live with. Even though children display individual complex behaviours, these have a minimal impact on others they share their home with. The robust impact assessments that have been completed

ensure that relationships between children are positive and complimentary. This means that children spend positive time together and enjoy each other's company. Furthermore, when the number of incidents between children is minimised, this helps to secure permanency for the children and create a calm, settled and happy home environment.

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

There have been no occasions when children have been reported missing from home. Staff know the children well, and are vigilant and observant. Because of this, they notice subtle behaviours presented by children that may be uncharacteristic. This has helped staff to prevent incidents prior to them occurring, and has ensured that children are encouraged and supported to return home. This helps to protect children and maintain their welfare.

Protocols and procedures in place to prevent and respond to children's unsafe behaviours are robust and well thought through. They are agreed with all relevant professionals and regularly updated and shared. They provide staff with explicit guidance on responding to incidents should they occur. The protocols and procedures consider each child as an individual and are preventative in nature. This highly effective planning manages and minimises risks inside and outside of the home.

It has been necessary for staff to physically intervene when children have displayed behaviours that may result in harm to themselves or others. After such incidents, the manager ensures that children's emotional and physical health needs are carefully considered, monitored and documented. This robust monitoring ensures that staff are mindful of children's physical and emotional presentation, and increases staff accountability. Furthermore, putting this additional safeguard in place to protect children also helps to improve children's health and well-being.

Safety work that is regularly completed with children ensures that they have a comprehensive understanding of risk. Topics covered are individual to the child. Sessions are creative and promote engagement and age-appropriate learning. For example, prior to going out with friends, one child was helped to understand where the nearest phone box was located, which landmarks were nearby and how to contact the home. In addition, staff ensured that the area was well covered by closed-circuit television. Staff made the child aware of the expectations of her and ensured that she had a thorough understanding of how to keep herself safe. This ensures that children are well informed, while allowing them to take appropriate, measured risks.

Staff are familiar with the procedures that are in place to protect children. The manager frequently revisits whistle-blowing procedures with the team. Additionally, agency staff are consulted following every visit to the home, and are provided with the opportunity to raise any concerns about the home or the practice of those working there. Furthermore, they are provided with necessary safeguarding and

whistle-blowing information, and are encouraged to openly share information. This helps to identify any negative practice within the established team, and promotes a transparent and child-focused safeguarding culture within the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff are trained to a high level. They have completed all the necessary mandatory training to care for children effectively. Additionally, the manager has sought in-depth and specific training from well-established external agencies. Training completed includes mental health first aid, online safety and adverse childhood experiences. Furthermore, the manager has created a series of specific workshops for staff to complete during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has ensured that staff have maintained, refreshed and improved their knowledge during this time.

The manager monitors the home effectively. Her internal monitoring processes are robust and enable her to make continuous improvements to the care provided for children. Unfortunately, independent monitoring reports have not been sent to the regulator in a timely manner. This has prevented external review from the regulator.

There is an experienced and qualified core staff team in place at the home. However, due to shift patterns and the availability of full-time positions it has been difficult to recruit additional staff and achieve a full cohort of staff. Because of this, agency staff are frequently used. While the manager has put robust measures in place to minimise the impact that this has on children, the children said that this is something they would change about the home.

Consultation with children is a priority. The manager ensures that children's views and wishes are listened to. In doing so, she regularly reviews and revisits all discussions held with children in the home, to ensure there are no missed opportunities for children to be listened to and understood. Furthermore, she proactively seeks the views and opinions of others, such as external professionals, neighbours and those who are important to children. Feedback is used to reflect upon practice, inform further development and improve and maintain relationships.

Effective multi-agency working ensures that all relevant professionals are well informed of all matters relating to the children. The manager is consistent in her approach to timely and transparent information-sharing. She is a driving force for multi-agency communication and has formed a number of relationships with key professionals. This provides children with valuable contacts, support networks and services which can help them.

The manager frequently and effectively advocates for children. She raises necessary concerns about the practice and conduct of external agencies where this affects the progress and experiences of children living in the home. Children have not wished to complain about the home, but are aware of their rights and the procedures to follow if they wish to make a complaint. Children have, however, been supported to raise concerns about other agencies where appropriate. Advocacy and children's rights

services are used effectively in order to pursue children's wishes and feelings. Because of this, children feel important, valued and listened to.

The home's manager is innovative in her approach to delivering exceptionally high-quality care to children through positive relationships and understanding, and through using proactive and preventative approaches to risk management. The manager continues to seek ways to improve children's experiences so that children continue to achieve and remain happy.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(d)(e)(h))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that the home has adequate staffing levels in order to reduce the use of agency staff. Ensure that reports produced by independent persons are sent to the regulator without delay.</p>	5 October 2021

Recommendation

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, 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)

Specifically, review the use of signage around the home and ensure that flooring is free from damage or marks, to achieve a more homely environment.

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: SC010090

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Partners in Care Limited

Registered provider address: 2 The Calls, Leeds LS2 7JU

Responsible individual: Amanda Quinn

Registered manager: Jade Vallantine

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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