

SC423606

Registered provider: Reamcare 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 and accommodation for up to seven children who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in 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: 4 to 5 October 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 **outstanding**

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: 17 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/10/2019	Full	Good
10/09/2018	Full	Good
21/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
14/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

As a result of living in this home, children have experienced sustained improvements in their lives, even when they have complex or challenging needs. This is outstanding. Children's experiences in the home enhance their opportunities in life, and the excellent quality of care drives their progress.

Staff provide dedicated and consistent care that helps children to develop trusting relationships with them. As a result, children are settled and their anxieties reduce. The home's motto is 'caring for children in a family environment'. The inspector found that the quality of care and the family environment in the home epitomise this ethos. A child said, 'I don't think I can put it into words, but I do feel really lucky to be here, the staff team is what makes it amazing.'

The use of enhanced children's 'progress monitors' ensures that staff explore every opportunity for children to fulfil their potential. Staff ask children, 'What will you be able to do before you leave the home?' This helps children to make clear their wishes and aspirations. From their starting points, children make comprehensive progress in all aspects of their lives. Children's notable achievements include improved sleep patterns, diet and personal care. Additionally, children improve their communication skills, self-esteem and peer relationships. Staff record children's unique 'magical moments', such as when one child attended a party for the first time.

The dedicated support from staff helps children to prepare for adulthood. A successful 'independence and life skills' programme enhances children's progress. The staff give children different types of individualised support, such as helping them to learn how to iron clothes and how to cook and helping them to understand intimate relationships and access community services.

The staff's focused efforts help children to develop new interests and maintain their hobbies. Children's wide-ranging interests include cheerleading, special interest clubs, playing the keyboard, and enjoy a once in a lifetime trip to a favourite Premier League football team match. Children's experiences are further enriched through trips to the park and the shops, go-karting, barbecues, safari park trips and going on the home's annual summer holiday together.

This year, children and staff have experienced two periods of isolation in the home, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During these periods of isolation, the staff gave the children reassurance in a thoughtful/sensitive/tactful way, and excelled at creating fun activities in the home, while keeping everyone safe. Children enjoyed 'bedroom doorway' quizzes and music nights. For every day of isolation, the children were rewarded with 'thanks for being so amazing' certificates. Children's mental health

was prioritised with targeted one-to-one sessions and access to an age-appropriate mental health well-being website.

The registered manager is an unapologetic advocate for the children's right to an education. Where children have special educational needs and/or disabilities, she will challenge and take steps to ensure that their education, health and care plans are reviewed and kept up to date by the responsible authorities. This helps to ensure that each child has access to an appropriate school. Staff provide additional support and reassurance for the children in their school classrooms, where needed. If children are waiting for a school place, the forward-thinking staff produce individualised children's school timetables in the home. Schoolwork and homework are completed, and children successfully complete their exams.

Children are helped to understand the routines and boundaries in the home. Their individual weekly timetables set out age-appropriate responsibilities for undertaking everyday jobs around the home, such as tidying their bedrooms and helping with the cooking. Reward points for positive behaviour are balanced with sanctions such as a loss of time on the computer.

Children enjoy having some of the responsibility for welcoming new children into the home. They introduce themselves to each other at children's meetings and help show children around their new home. This gives children a sense of ownership of their home.

The home is a large seven-bedroom property. Visitors are greeted with a large photographic montage of the children in the home. The home is well furnished, and children's bedrooms are personalised and comfortable. The large kitchen has recently been upgraded and redecorated. Children enjoy healthy meals around the large kitchen table together. Any maintenance requests are acted on without delay.

Staff ensure that children's treasured items are saved in memory boxes. When children move on, they take with them individual memory boxes and books, which contain all of their special letters, certificates and 'words and pictures' written by the staff. Care leavers are happily encouraged to return to the home. They are invited to tea, play board games with the staff, and share their experiences of independent living with children who are ready to move on.

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

Highly effective staff planning manages and minimises any risks to the children, both inside and outside of the home. Staff understand the children's needs very well, and when children are new to the home, risks are well understood. Detailed risk assessments for each child are regularly reviewed, and the actions that staff take to mitigate risks help to keep children safe. Effective safeguarding practice means that children's individual risks reduce from their starting points.

The home's care planning processes are child centred. Prior to moving into the home, children are invited to tea and, where possible, to stay overnight. The staff's observations help leaders and managers to understand the children's needs in detail, and contribute to thorough matching and compatibility assessments. Comprehensive and detailed 'post-placement reviews' help leaders and managers to learn from children's experiences in the home. Reviews highlight learning and any actions that need to be taken to further develop the service.

Staff collaborate with the children when they are ready to access the community independently. Children consent to the use of technical innovations to help ensure their safety. These include a mobile phone locator application and a prepaid debit card with parental controls to oversee children's spending habits. All of the children spoken with said that they feel safe living in the home.

The children's positive behaviour support plans and specialist assessments help staff to respond to their complex needs. Children are successfully encouraged to contribute to their plans, and they suggest creative ways for staff to help them when they are upset. Staff support children with purposeful, targeted key-work sessions, mood diaries and reflection time, all of which help the staff to understand each child's particular challenges. This helps children to remain settled in the home.

The children receive highly effective bespoke support, such as mood cushions, visual timetables, timers and other sensory aids, which enhances the other support strategies that are in place. If staff use physical restraint to manage challenging behaviour, the actions taken are necessary to prevent harm or injury to children or others. The manager always reviews the use of any restraint that has taken place in the home.

The staff provide child-centred care that includes ensuring that children maintain their relationships with family and friends. For example, substantial preparation and risk assessments were undertaken to ensure that one child continued have face-to-face visits with their family during lockdown periods that took place as a result of COVID-19.

Children contribute to their care arrangements. With staff support, children attend their important meetings. Staff ensure that every child has access to an independent advocate where needed. Children participate in their regular children's meetings in the home and staff ensure that children's requests are actioned. However, the children's meeting records have some actions duplicated, which is confusing.

The children's guide is personalised with photographs and pictures. However, the language used could be more accessible to younger children, and the contact information for the Office of the Children's Commissioner should be listed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are confident, inspirational and ambitious for the children in their care. There is a culture of high aspiration for staff to change and improve the

lives of children. A professional said, 'There is a clear dedication to the development and well-being of the children in their care, and they have a clear understanding of the children's complex needs.'

Leaders and managers continue to develop the service. A new staff handover document has reduced the amount of administrative work needed, thus enabling the staff to spend more time with the children. The registered manager displays a comprehensive knowledge of the strengths of the home and any areas for development. She always actions the independent visitor's report recommendations to further enhance the care of the children.

Staff described the registered manager as supportive, both professionally and personally. She has excellent working relationships with partner agencies, parents, and schools. The manager also has a strong sense of the rights of children. She will professionally advocate and successfully challenge placing authorities and other professionals, in order to ensure that children have access to all of the available services that will help them thrive. A member of staff said, 'The manager goes above and beyond.'

Recruitment procedures are robust and ensure that only suitable people work at the home. Interviewees must conduct a shadow shift as part of the recruitment process, and children give feedback to the registered manager.

The registered manager has high expectations of her staff team. Internal promotion is actively encouraged. Training is extensive and online training has continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff complete an in-depth probation period, after which they enrol on a course to obtain the relevant qualification for their role, and all staff have a suitable children's home qualification.

The home is fully staffed. The staff team is experienced, competent and highly motivated. A professional observed, 'Even after a busy day, everyone had a smile on their face.' Another professional said, 'They demonstrate themselves to be a highly child-focused and nurturing service.'

The two requirements set at the last inspection have been met.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is age-appropriate and helps children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. In particular, the children's guide should be easily understood by children of all reading abilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person should ensure that children are able to see that their views are acted upon. In particular, the children's meetings records should clearly record completed actions and avoid repetition. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

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: SC423606

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Reamcare Limited

Registered provider address: 100 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0UW

Responsible individual: Rayman Jeetoo

Registered manager: Gail Lumber

Inspector

Victoria Jones, Social Care Inspector

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