

SC384018

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small group run by a private provider. The home provides care for up to four children who may have experienced significant trauma in their lives resulting in a range of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The provider operates a school nearby.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

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: 19 and 20 January 2022

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: 31 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2019	Full	Good
05/12/2018	Full	Good
31/07/2017	Full	Good
26/07/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress from their starting points. Professionals are pleased with the care that staff provide. Staff are experienced and confident. They are caring and nurturing, and keen to introduce the children to new experiences. Staff's enthusiasm for activities such as ice-skating, going to the gym and horse-riding has meant that children are encouraged and well supported to try these activities. As a result, the children's lives have been enriched.

The house is welcoming and homely. Children are involved in choosing colour schemes for their bedrooms. There are photos of the children displayed in the communal areas of the home. This helps the children to feel that they belong, and that the house is their home.

Two children have moved into the home since the last inspection. The manager completed thorough risk and matching assessments for each child before they moved in. Social workers confirmed that the planning process was thorough and supported a smooth introduction to the home. Consequently, the children have settled well.

Four children have moved on since the monitoring visit in March 2021. For one child, the placement ended in an unplanned way due to the nature of events leading up to their move. The manager supported the child to understand why they had to move on and continues to keep in touch with the child. This shows the manager's commitment to the child even though they no longer live at the home.

Staff are proactive in preparing older children for moving into semi-independent homes. Independence plans are introduced well in advance of the move so that children are confident with household chores, cooking and budgeting. Therefore, they are prepared for adulthood.

Staff provide high levels of support to children to help them maintain relationships with their families. Staff appreciate the importance of weekly phone calls and video calls between the children and their family and friends. When family members live a distance away, the staff arrange to meet at a mutually agreed place halfway between both locations. A social worker said that the staff have been creative in arranging meetings between a child and their parent, in line with government restrictions due to COVID-19. This creativity meant that the child's anxieties during lockdown periods were considerably reduced.

Children who did not attend school before they moved to the home are accessing part-time education timetables at school with a view to building up to full time. The manager helps to progress applications to local schools, and challenges delays or decisions that affect children's access to full-time education. When there have been delays in sourcing an education place, staff have introduced online learning and

worksheets supported by tutors from the provider's school. Good support with education helps lessen children's anxieties about returning to school.

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

One child has made remarkable progress in becoming safer. The staff's nurturing approach and encouragement to try new experiences and age-appropriate activities have considerably reduced the child's episodes of missing from home. The child is now going to the gym and learning to ice skate. These are achievements which the child is very proud of.

Staff enable children to take age-appropriate risks. This includes gaining trust to have time out of the home without staff supervision. One child goes to a weekly roller-skating disco while staff wait in the car outside. At other times, the child walks to a local supermarket to buy cooking ingredients. Risk assessments for unsupervised time are detailed and contain presenting risks. These are reviewed regularly and updated following any changes. This helps staff to feel confident in their approach and to be consistent in their responses.

There have been incidents of children going missing from the home. Staff have responded in line with individual missing-from-care protocols to help find and return the child to the home as soon as possible on each occasion. For one child, although the manager requested return home interviews, there are no records to show that these interviews took place. Therefore, the manager is unable to respond to information provided by the child during the interview to reduce further incidents of going missing.

The manager regularly reviews the detailed location risk assessment which includes information from the local police liaison officer. However, the data about criminal activity in the area has not been updated. Therefore, the manager has not been aware of potential local risks for children already living at the home or when considering a child's move into the home.

There are alarms on all the children's bedroom doors to monitor their movements at night. Although this may be appropriate for some children, it is unclear why alarms are in use for other children. The system does not allow for individual room alarms to be set. This is an unnecessary restriction on children who do not require them.

Physical intervention is used appropriately to keep children safe. Staff have received the required training and interventions are recorded thoroughly. Children's views are always sought and recorded and staff debriefs have taken place. However, on three records there was insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of the staff debriefs or the detail of the manager's oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a highly visible presence. Children enjoy spending time with the manager and feel able to approach her for help, knowing that she will respond to

them. One child had written a complaint that staff had broken their scooter. The manager acknowledged the complaint in writing and took action to investigate and repair the scooter. The manager ensures that children's views are actively sought and central to their care planning. Children's meetings are held weekly, and children are encouraged to talk about the home and other areas of their lives. The children know that the things they raise will be acted on by the managers.

The manager has established a stable and committed staff team. Staff enjoy working at the home. The managers recognise the importance of familiar faces for the children. The staff cover additional shifts and support each other to make sure that there is always the required number of staff available. Children benefit from consistent and familiar staff at the home each day. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

Staff said that they feel well supported by the managers. They receive regular supervisions and annual appraisals. Competency-based review meetings with the manager address individual staff practice issues and generate clear plans to enable staff to develop their performance.

The manager has a clear understanding of the strengths of the staff and their areas for development. When recruiting new staff, the manager is keen to ensure that they possess the skills and qualities to complement the existing team. Safe recruitment processes are comprehensively carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The staff receive a thorough induction which includes a range of training and shadow shifts with experienced staff. Good induction, support and training help staff to meet children's needs and provide continuity of care.

The manager has established good working relationships with professionals, who are positive about the communication and working relationship with her. Social workers receive regular updates about their children's progress. Social workers said the staff always attend and contribute to the children's meetings. Children benefit from knowing that everyone is working together to meet their needs.

The home has been affected by COVID-19 on two separate occasions. On both occasions, staff volunteered to stay at the home with the children in line with government isolation guidelines. The manager was proud of how she and the team worked together to keep the children safe, despite how exhausting it was for them.

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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))</p> <p>This relates to ensuring that there is a written record of independent return home interviews with each child.</p>	11 March 2022
<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>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the manager reviews each record of restraint to identify effective practice and respond to issues of concern.</p>	11 March 2022
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p>	11 March 2022

<p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that bedroom door alarms are only used for the purpose of safeguarding.</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). (Regulation 46 (1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the local crime statistics are kept up to date.</p>	11 March 2022

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: SC384018

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited

Registered provider address: The Old Snap Factory, Twyford Industrial Estate,
Twyford Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 3LJ

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Tina Twyman

Inspector

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector

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