

SC020151

Registered provider: Country Care Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children live across two homes. One is a large farmhouse in a rural location and the other is in a local town. This home has a school attached.

There is a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 June 2022

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: 12 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/05/2021	Full	Outstanding
10/12/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
25/06/2019	Full	Good
07/11/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children at this home continue to receive an outstanding level of care. Their life chances improve. This is because the manager provides strong leadership and staff provide extremely high-quality care, based on a functional multi-agency approach.

Managers and staff work to the specific model of care of dialectical behaviour therapy. This model of care influences all aspects of care practice. This means that children receive an excellent standard of care that is also consistent. The home's therapist, together with a consultant psychologist, ensures staff have the underpinning knowledge and training in this model of care. Animal care is also a focus and provides children with additional therapeutic experiences.

Relationships between staff and children are exceptional. children are encouraged to live as a family. For instance, they eat around the kitchen table each day. Successes are celebrated, however small. Staff work extremely hard on this element of children's care. They know the importance of building and maintaining effective relationships based on family values.

Stakeholders say staff are passionate about their jobs. They say staff help children to work towards a positive trajectory in life. Multi-agency working is exemplary. Care plans and risk assessments are always shared with the professional team involved with the children.

When children move to this home, consideration is given to maintaining appropriate contact with their friends and family. Staff find the best way of maintaining this contact, even when children have moved a considerable distance from their family.

Most children attend school and quickly begin to make steady progress. Some children make exceptional progress in their education. One child is applying for a university place. School and care staff work extremely closely together. As a result of this, information-sharing between education and care is seamless.

When children struggle with their self-care skills, specialist advice has not been sought in a timely manner. Improvements to living arrangements have not been made quickly enough. However, this element of care does not detract from the exceptional progress made in several other areas of their lives.

When children are planning to come and live at this home, they are provided with detailed information in a child-friendly format. This explains what to expect, what the expectations of the home are, and important contact details for someone independent to speak with. However, not all the information provided is accurate.

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

Children are safer due to living in this home. Managers understand that for some children, risk taking behaviours will continue. However, because of highly effective information-sharing with stakeholders, continuing risk is a shared responsibility. Specialist help is sought when needed. This is a real strength at this home.

All children are encouraged and supported to make their views, wishes and feelings known. There are no barriers to communication. Staff listen carefully to children. Children know how to make a complaint. When they do, managers take their concerns seriously and offer opportunities to speak with an independent person. The strength of the relationships between staff and children means that, when appropriate, negative behaviour can be challenged. Children respond by continuing to develop and learn in a safe, supportive and encouraging environment.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. This means that they are confident in their abilities to keep children safe. Managers know that children who live at this home are vulnerable to exploitation and the impact of trauma. Managers ensure that staff are provided with training to understand these risk factors and staff learn how to reduce these risks for children.

This home's procedures for the administration and safe-keeping of medication are safe and robust. Staff are confident in their abilities. They receive training and their competency is tested.

The location of both homes is regularly reviewed to identify risks and hazards. Managers ensure that they maintain effective relationships with local police and other important services.

Children who are preparing to live independently are provided with excellent support and therefore develop self-care and independence living skills. For this group of children, providing a degree of freedom can be risky. However, risks are well assessed, shared with stakeholders and overseen by the therapy team. This means that the transition from being cared for to being more independent is well managed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is well established. He is experienced and has an effective deputy manager. They lead a highly motivated team that has the welfare of the children at the forefront of their work.

Leaders and managers have created an environment that is supportive and extremely positive. Staff are confident because they receive clear guidance and training. The manager has developed a strong and diverse staff team, with a range of skills and experience.

Managers ensure that staff receive a very high standard of supervision. This supervision is both supportive and reflective. Staff are encouraged and supported to develop. This has improved since the last inspection.

Staff are extremely positive about working here. They feel supported effectively. Managers ensure that staff have regular access to training that develops their skills, knowledge and competence. When staff move into a more senior role, they are provided with a higher level of training to ensure they are effective leaders.

Managers ensure that staff have regular opportunities to meet with each other, to share information about the children and for peer support. Managers also provide a good degree of appropriate and effective challenge to staff. This ensures that staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice.

Managers have ensured that, despite outstanding outcomes from the last inspection, they have not stood still. They have continued developing and improving, particularly with the further embedding of their therapeutic model of care practice.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult;</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)(vi)(ix))</p> <p>This relates to the delay in accessing specialist advice to help children with their self-care skills.</p>	2 August 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. This relates to information in the children's guide not being accurate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: SC020151

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Country Care Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: The Meadows, Beech Lane, Dove Holes, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 8DJ

Responsible individual: Rachel Dowle

Registered manager: Jason Sellars

Inspector

Simon Hunter, 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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