

SC020133

Registered provider: Arnfield Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to eight children. It provides short- to medium-term placements. The provider states in its statement of purpose that it can provide care for children with social and emotional difficulties, which may be related to early life experiences.

The home is owned by a private company. Education is provided at an on-site school and through residential trips and outdoor education. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision on this site.

The registered manager is new in post and was previously the home's deputy manager for a number of years.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2022

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	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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: 15 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/06/2021	Full	Good
05/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive in this nurturing and caring home. They achieve great outcomes. For example, children who previously struggled to attend school are now looking forward to each day in education. Children, who were at risk of harm prior to coming to live at the home, develop strategies to keep themselves safe. This is all achieved in an environment of unconditional positive regard. Staff work hard at building positive relationships with children. As a result, children feel safe and secure and understand that they matter.

The on-site independent school allows children to receive seamless care and education. Use of residential and outdoor activities is key to the company's ethos. Challenging and adventurous activities such as caving, canoeing, climbing and bike-riding help to build children's resilience, confidence and self-esteem. Staff are always alongside the children and do these activities with them, helping positive relationships flourish.

Health outcomes are a priority. On arrival, any outstanding medical appointments are quickly resolved. Staff talk with children and explore health issues sensitively. Plans are put together with children to help them feel part of their own healthcare. Local health professionals work in partnership with staff to support children and resolve issues. Children feel valued and involved in decision-making about their health and are healthier as a result.

Children flourish in this home. The manager believes that children's outcomes need to be 'amazing' and staff work hard to achieve this. Staff use innovative approaches to support children, and the impact of trauma is understood. Staff are always finding new ways to keep children engaged. Direct one-to-one work is carried out with the children on a variety of topics, such as internet safety. As a result, children make better life choices.

Staff recognise that children have important relationships in their lives outside of the home. Everyone works together to help children maintain those relationships if it is safe to do so. Family members are welcomed to the home. For example, parents are encouraged to come and cook a meal with their child. This helps in promoting relationships with key people in the child's life.

Children experience sustained and consistent care. There is a core team of staff who approach their role with care and commitment. There is a family feeling to the home. Careful thought is given to the impact of new children coming to the home so as not to disrupt the children already living there and/or place them at risk. Matching children this way ensures that children's best interests are considered.

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

Children's safety and well-being is of paramount importance. From the point of referral, managers begin to consider how the home can best keep children safe. As a result, when a child moves into the home, staff are clear about children's risks and behaviours and how to manage these. They use their knowledge of the children, and relationships with children, to recognise changes in behaviour which may indicate potential risk and act accordingly. There is a multi-agency safeguarding response to incidents of concern. A parent said, 'They did so much work with [name of child] about keeping safe, they really helped [name of child] to understand what [name of child] had been through.'

Children are clear about expectations for their behaviour from the moment they enter the home. A child said, 'I came in and there were no rules in my life. I could do what I wanted to do, and they put the rules in straight away. I hated it at first, but they had to do that to keep me safe. And now look at me. I am in education. I see my friends. If you keep to the rules, you get lots of freedom. If you don't keep to the rules, you don't. It's simple really.'

Staff are experienced in managing children's behaviour. Positive and engaging relationships, alongside clear expectations, help children to become calmer and more thoughtful about their reactions. On occasion, use of physical intervention is necessary and proportionate to keep children safe. There is a good level of debrief after each physical intervention to ensure children and staff have a chance to reflect on what happened. This helps everybody involved to consider what could be done differently to help avoid the use of physical intervention in the future.

Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated accordingly to ensure children receive consistency of care from staff. This means staff have a good understanding of children's vulnerabilities and the actions they should take to keep children safe. Over time, the risks to children reduce as they become safer and more settled in their home.

Children who go missing from the home receive a coordinated response. Staff are robust in their response to any missing episodes and ensure that risk assessments are effective tools in risk reduction. Staff are tenacious in supporting children to maintain their safety. Effective and imaginative direct work helps children understand how to keep themselves safer.

Suitable recruitment checks are carried out for new staff. The manager is confident that safe recruitment practices are implemented and that staff who are working in the home are safe to do so. If senior managers are alerted to any concerns about staff practice, they seek advice from the local authority designated officer appropriately. This ensures that children are safeguarded.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's longstanding registered manager was absent from the home for a period of time, and she has subsequently secured a promotion within the company. During this time, the home's deputy manager acted as interim manager. She has recently registered with Ofsted. There has been a seamless change in the senior leadership structure at the home which has provided consistency for the staff team and children.

The home's new manager is relishing the challenge of her new role. She is enthusiastic and ambitious for the children in her care and the staff team. She is committed to ensuring that children have fun, make progress and are safe. The manager can identify areas for the home's development, including further enhancing management monitoring processes. Improvements are being made to the consultation systems that demonstrate how children are listened to. This is being achieved by improving record-keeping to show how staff act on children's views.

There is a committed staff team made up of both permanent and bank staff. There has been very little turnover of staff since the last inspection. However, the home continues to carry some vacancies. The provider has a recruitment and retention action plan to encourage new, permanent staff to join the staff team and to reward existing staff. In the meantime, shifts are covered by the existing staff team. No agency staff are used. As a result, there is consistency of care for children.

Through one-to-one-supervisions and appraisals, the manager knows the strengths and areas for development in the team. This has enabled her to develop staff skills. Staff are enthusiastic in their feedback about working at the home. They consistently fed back to the inspectors how well supported, listened to and happy they felt in their roles.

Staff and managers work effectively with the on-site education staff to ensure that the approach and ethos, set out in the home's statement of purpose, are followed. Staff receive the relevant training to enable them to deliver informed care, and continuously assess children's needs and the impact of the care they are receiving. When a child's needs change, staff swiftly receive training relevant to the specific needs of the child. This enables staff to meet children's needs very well.

Professionals and parents report that children are receiving excellent care and that communication takes place regularly. They confirm that living in this home has made a significant difference to children's safety and their progress. There is positive partnership working regarding the team around the child. The manager is not afraid to make difficult decisions in the best interests of children or to challenge other stakeholders. This drives effective planning for children.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('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: SC020133

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Arnfield Care Limited

Registered provider address: Arnfield Tower Activity Centre, Manchester Road, Tintwistle, Glossop SK13 1NE

Responsible individual: Wayne Relf

Registered manager: Dawn Harvey

Inspectors

Catherine Honey, Social Care Inspector
Lizette Watts, 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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