

SC031220

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs the children's home. It provides care for up to six children who may have social and emotional difficulties. A fundamental aim of the home is to provide therapeutic care for the children.

Ofsted registered the manager of the home in June 2022. At the time of the inspection, six children lived at the home.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2023

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	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 14 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2022	Full	Good
27/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
13/06/2018	Full	Good
21/08/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children have excelled in all areas of their lives since moving into the home. Children are confident about what the future holds for them and have set goals to work towards. The support that children receive in the home has built their resilience. This has enabled children to have a positive outlook, despite the challenges that they experience from time to time.

The home reflects the personalities of the children who live there. Children are proud of their home. Carers actively involve children in decorating or adding personal touches to the home. This has instilled a sense of belonging and togetherness.

The assistant psychologist, who works at the home daily, alongside the manager, supports the carers' awareness of the children's circumstances and needs. The way that this is done ensures that carers better understand the historical issues that children have grappled with. In relation to the carers, a child told an inspector, 'They have made me believe in myself. They have changed my understanding of relationships.' The substantive relationships that children have with their carers have provided children with a strong platform to build trusting and loving relationships.

Carers support children to come together daily and share their thoughts in a community meeting that takes place in the home. Inspectors saw that all children make meaningful contributions in their meeting. In part, this was due to the skill of the carers, who orchestrated a seamless flow to the meeting. Carers have taught children the skills of patience and tolerance. Therefore, children understand the need to respect one another's contributions. The community meeting plays a vital function in bonding the group and developing the children's ability to resolve issues as and when they arise.

All children consistently attend their place of education. Carers consistently support children, emotionally and practically, to succeed in their respective places of education. All children have a sense of direction and a plan for what they are working towards. This enables children to believe that their goals and ambitions are achievable.

Carers make excellent efforts to work harmoniously alongside children's families. This enables carers to effectively support children to better understand and develop family ties. Additionally, carers effectively work alongside children's social workers to overcome significant barriers that prevent children rebuilding positive relationships with family members. One parent described the carers as being 'amazing'. Fundamentally, carers have played a crucial role in repairing relationships and bolstering children's informal support networks.

Carers support children to lead healthy and active lifestyles. Carers actively encourage children to pursue their interests and contribute to their community. Children are members of sports clubs and arrange charitable fundraising events. Children talk enthusiastically about their experiences at the home, which gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment.

The language that carers use in children's written records is relatable. This has encouraged children to read and contribute to their plans. It also helps children to have a better understanding of all aspects of their care. Crucially, language used in the home does not marginalise children.

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

Carers are skilled at teaching children responsibility. When children struggle with specific responsibilities, carers reassure and support them to recover and try again. Children feel safe to make mistakes and understand why carers need to implement boundaries. Carers equip children with the skills to become more independent in their lives. This leads to carers effectively preparing and supporting children to move on from the home at a time when they feel ready and able.

Children work through a specific, time-limited behavioural programme overseen by an assistant psychologist. The protected time that children have with the assistant psychologist has empowered children to address and rationalise complex experiences and behaviours.

Children value their sessions with the assistant psychologist, with one child stating, 'I do not know where I would be without her. She's been amazing.' Once a child has worked through the programme, the assistant psychologist, overseen by the clinical lead, writes a comprehensive report. This enables social workers and carers to have a better understanding of the ongoing support that the child will need.

Children's risk assessments are dynamic and easy for carers to understand and apply. The children's risk assessments are initially formulated jointly by the assistant psychologist and the home's manager. This ensures that there is clear accountability from the outset of the child living at the home.

Children's access to the internet and use of social media platforms are linked to the child's risk assessment. The home has a staged approach to building trust and broadening children's access to the internet. This equips children to gradually learn how to enjoy the benefits of accessing the internet responsibly.

There have been no incidents that have required carers to restrain children for a significant period. This is indicative of the meaningful and substantive relationships that carers have with children in the home. For children with medical conditions, it is clear what technique carers should apply if restraint is considered necessary to keep children safer. This shows that the manager is intuitive in his care planning of the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager inspires a culture of curiosity, learning and creativity. This approach empowers carers to overcome barriers that stifle children's progress. The manager makes the best use of resources that are at his disposal to maximise the potential for carers to make a difference in children's lives.

Before children move into the home, the manager is adept at explaining the home's behavioural programme to children. This gives children clarity and reduces their feelings of being burdened with unnecessary anxiety. However, information about record-keeping associated with children's sessions with the assistant psychologist was vague. Although the manager took immediate steps to rectify this, work needs to be revisited with children and their families so that they have a fuller understanding of the children's confidentiality agreement.

The manager looks outwardly to develop his service. This has invited professionals from an array of disciplines to offer objective advice and guidance around the care of the children. This has inspired a culture of learning and an appetite to develop existing skills, meaning that the team is continually striving to improve.

Team meetings form a valuable cog in the functioning of the home. Carers maximise this forum by making important contributions. The assistant psychologist ensures that the opportunity to raise awareness of the children's needs is not missed. Team meetings build a sense of collective ownership that bonds carers in their accountability towards the children in the home. This means that children experience better consistency of care.

Carers receive regular supervision that is practice focused and allows for reflection on children's experiences and learning. Supervision sessions seamlessly link in with team meetings. This clarifies whether carers heed information that is shared with them. Additionally, carers' professional development is an important strand that promotes ongoing learning and development. Supervision enables the manager to learn whether knowledge is embedded or whether more training or supportive interventions are needed.

At the point of a referral being made to the home, the manager is thorough when considering whether he and his team can meet the child's needs. The manager ensures that his analysis incorporates the existing needs of the children who already live in the home. The manager's diligence around children moving into and out of the home has created a stable group environment. Therefore, children have a platform to flourish and have a positive experience.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person needs to ensure that children and parents understand the nature of records kept by the home and how to access them. In particular, the manager should ensure that children and parents understand the confidentiality agreement associated with the children's therapy sessions. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5).

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: SC031220

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Compass Community Ltd, 3 Rayns Way, Syston, Leicester LE7 1PF

Responsible individual: Jessica Middleton

Registered manager: Christopher Bowker

Inspectors

Steve Guirey, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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