

1226397

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A large private company operates this children's home. It provides care for up to four children, who may have specific emotional needs and may have experienced trauma.

The registered manager is no longer in post. A new manager has been appointed. She is suitably qualified and is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 October 2023

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: 30 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/02/2022	Full	Good
20/10/2021	Full	Inadequate
26/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, there were four children living in the home. Two of the children have lived at the home for over a year, and two children have recently moved in. All four children are making progress from their original starting points. They are building positive relationships with staff, their peers and their families. Their education attendance is improving and incidents are reducing.

Children receive thoughtful care from staff who look after them well and help them to develop. The inspector observed that children have positive and trusting relationships with most staff. Most children said they were happy and liked living in the home. When asked to rate the home, one child said: 'a solid 10'. This supportive environment enables children to make progress and have positive experiences of living in the home.

Children moving into the home benefit from transitions that are thoughtfully managed and supported by staff. For example, before moving in, staff encourage children to visit the home to see what it is like and to meet the staff and other children. This supports children to reduce their anxieties and settle into their new home.

Staff support children to access appropriate education to meet their needs. All children are in full-time education and their attendance is improving. There is excellent communication between staff and education providers. When children have difficulties attending school, staff work closely with education professionals to ensure that children are supported back into school as soon as possible. Staff also support children to take extra-curricular learning. This supports the children to progress educationally.

Staff support children to develop hobbies and interests. They encourage children to take part in a wide range of activities. These include cinema trips, boxing, cadets and pamper nights, as well as a summer holiday to the coast. Staff keep photos of all these activities and experiences, enabling children to reflect on their memories in the future.

Staff help children to attend their routine health appointments and will seek specialist support when required. The approach to the therapeutic model is evident through the staff's practice. Staff support children to complete the home's therapeutic programme. Children complete this with the home's programme psychologist. Staff receive regular consultation with clinicians to help give them an understanding of how to support children better. This has a positive impact on children and helps them to understand their life journey.

Staff actively promote time for children to spend with their families and friends. Children have re-established relationships with their family members through this

support from staff. One child has recently enjoyed a summer holiday with their family and another child has enjoyed an overnight stay with their sibling.

Staff support the children to develop their own identity when they are exploring their gender and sexuality. Staff have ensured that they have changed their communication style and essential documents to reflect children's chosen name and pronouns. This supports the children to improve their sense of self and feel more confident.

The home is clean and tidy. The lounge, kitchen and games room are beautifully decorated, warm and homely. There are photos around the home of children and staff encourage children to personalise their bedrooms. There is an ongoing maintenance programme. Refurbishment and repairs to the home have been completed. This includes the new flooring and redecoration of the lounge and children's bedrooms. However, the external areas of the home are overgrown and untidy. Both the front drive and rear garden need weeding. There was also rubbish and old bricks left on the front drive. This detracts from the welcoming feeling.

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

Safeguarding practices in the home are effective. Staff understand risks and potential triggers for children. They use this knowledge to promote children's safety and well-being. As a result, incidents in the home have significantly reduced.

Overall, managers ensure that there are comprehensive risk management behaviour support plans in place for children. They ensure that these are regularly reviewed, with clear strategies in place for staff to follow to reduce risks for the children. However, one child's risk assessment viewed did not contain information regarding an agreed de-escalation strategy. While this has not impacted on the child, it does have the potential to do so, as this omission may cause inconsistency in staff's responses. The manager did rectify this during the inspection.

Managers take prompt action when there are allegations, complaints or concerns regarding staff practice. Managers ensure that the appropriate people are informed, and investigations are conducted thoroughly. Safeguarding records are comprehensive. Managers act quickly to rectify shortfalls in staff practice, including taking disciplinary action when required. This helps children to feel safe and listened to.

There have been no incidents where children have been missing from the home. There are clear missing-from-care protocols in place for each child. Staff are aware of the actions they would need to take if a child were to go missing from the home.

Staff conduct extensive work with children to enable children to understand how to keep themselves safe. Children work through the home's SAFE programme by completing modules and qualifications on topics such as internet and phone safety, safe relationships and anger management. In addition, the therapy programme helps children to develop alternative healthy coping strategies to daily life

experiences. This supports children to become more resilient, while building their confidence and self-worth and thus improving their future life chances.

Incidents requiring staff to physically intervene have reduced. Staff use restraint as a last resort. Managers have good oversight of all incidents. They ensure that reflection takes place with staff and children following any intervention. This ensures that any intervention used is necessary and proportionate and helps to keep children safe.

Staff respond with sensitivity and compassion when children harm themselves. This means that children know that they will get help if they need it and so they seek this from staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the assurance inspection in March 2023, there have been changes in the leadership and management of the home. The deputy manager has recently been appointed as the manager of the home. She is extremely enthusiastic, dedicated and caring. The manager leads by example, and she wants the best for children. The current registered manager has returned to his senior post within the organisation. He continues to support the manager and the home through this role.

Managers have effective monitoring systems in place, which support them to review the quality of care. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development at the home and have an abundance of plans and aspirations that demonstrate high ambition for the development of the home. Managers and staff share high aspirations for the children to continue to make progress.

Staff say they are well supported by the management of the home. Staff receive good-quality, regular supervision to support their development. There are also highly reflective, regular team meetings, and the home's programmes psychologist completes consultation and training with staff. These measures help staff to feel supported and develops their practice. They also ensure that children receive consistent, good-quality care.

Staff are well trained. As well as mandatory training, staff have been provided with child-specific training. This includes autism, LGBTQ and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder training. This means that staff have the skills and knowledge to keep children safe.

There is a small staff team whose members have a variety of skills, experience and qualifications. There are some vacancies. Recruitment is ongoing and staff are recruited following safer recruitment requirements. Staffing is provided in line with children's assessed needs, with minimal use of agency staff. Where there are shortfalls through sickness, managers step in and support shift cover.

Managers and staff maintain good working relationships with children's families and professionals. During the inspection, professionals spoken to by inspectors were

positive about the quality of care provided to children. They told inspectors that the communication from managers and staff was excellent. They were happy with the progress children have made since coming to live in the home. One social worker said: 'Communication is really good. We have triangulation meetings every two weeks. Staff understand [name of child] so well. They put in the correct strategies for him and meet his needs.' Another professional said: 'Communication is excellent, it is a strength of the home.'

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing environment that meets the needs of the children. In particular, ensure that the home's external areas are maintained to a good standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, the risk assessment should include all agreed de-escalation strategies for staff to follow. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: 1226397

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Peter Hylton

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

Nateisha Cardoza-Evans, Social Care Inspector

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