

2528516

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to six children aged between 10 and 17 with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2023.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 January 2024

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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
14/04/2021	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who come to live at this home have experienced complex trauma. Since the last inspection, six children have moved out of the home and six children have moved in. At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. One of these children was spending time in alternative accommodation with staff to support them to keep them safer. This child was not seen as part of the inspection.

Children who have moved into the home have made progress from their starting points. This has included progress in health, education, and social and emotional development. However, some children have not continued to make progress in these areas. When progress stalls, this is identified by the manager so that effective multi-agency care planning for children can begin, or moves out of the home can be considered. Despite consistent efforts from the manager and staff to support children through challenging life circumstances, some children have needed to move on from the home in less-planned ways.

The children have good relationships with staff. Staff know the children well. They are playful and respond to the children with warmth and nurture. Through support from the home's psychologist, staff practise a trauma-informed approach and understand that the behaviours that children may present to them are communicating unmet needs. Staff's responses and the therapeutic work with children are helping the children to make sense of their feelings. One child has made significant progress through this work. For the other children, who are new to the home, the long-term progress is yet to be seen.

All five children are in education. They are supported to access reduced timetables or receive additional support from alternative education providers. Some children, who have moved to the home more recently, still require additional support to assess and understand their education and health needs. Feedback from education professionals is positive about communication between the manager and school settings as well as the support and encouragement that staff provide to children to attend education. Children who have not been in school for many months are developing more social skills to enable their future learning.

Some children have additional health needs. Staff receive further training on these specific needs to provide bespoke health support for children. Staff understand children's healthcare plans and spend time with the children helping them to think about their health and lifestyle choices, such as stopping vaping. The manager advocated for one health assessment to take place in the home to reduce the anxiety that this child felt about attending an appointment. Children's health needs are better met when staff can advocate for them and have the appropriate knowledge and training.

Staff help children to do things that they enjoy. One child opted to go on a holiday. Other children have enjoyed local days out. Staff help children to spend time with their family members and to see their friends, even when those important to them live far away from home. Children benefit from improved relationships with their families because of the support that staff provide.

The home is welcoming and well decorated. There are different social spaces around the home to give children calm and quiet spaces away from their peers. Children's rooms are personalised to their tastes, and the children's presence in the home is evident throughout with pictures and murals on the walls created by them. The manager responds quickly to general maintenance requirements to keep the home in good condition. When items in the home are damaged, these are quickly replaced. Combined, these efforts help children to develop a sense of pride in their home and a sense of belonging.

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

Staff understand children's vulnerabilities and presenting needs well. They know children's care plans and risk assessments and use these detailed plans to support the ways in which they can help to keep children safe.

When children do go missing from care, staff respond quickly. They are able to spot the signs of potential for missing-from-care episodes and spend time with the children, using humour and other skilled interventions to redirect them when they show signs of distress. Staff actively search for the children and work with local agencies, including the police, health professionals and transport police, to keep children safe.

Staff have needed to hold children physically to keep them safe. There are clear and detailed records that show the rationale for this. Holding children is used as a last resort. When incidents have taken place, children and staff are consistently spoken with after these events and there is management oversight from the registered manager and the responsible individual. This helps the manager and staff to learn from these events.

Some children have experienced complex mental health needs. For one child, this has meant hospital admissions to meet their needs. Staff advocated for this child's mental health needs and ensured that necessary assessments took place to support this child's well-being and long-term recovery in hospital. Other children, when distressed, have self-harmed. When this happens, staff respond with care and nurture and offer first aid and professional medical support as required. After such significant events, staff spend time with the children to help them to explore and understand their feelings. This helps to improve children's well-being.

Children have sometimes been in unsafe situations when communicating with unsuitable people online. Staff understand these risks and make regular checks on children's phones to support their safety. Children participate in a variety of focused

sessions with staff and therapeutic practitioners to explore their safety and choices online. This helps children to make informed decisions when communicating online.

Staff consistently support, praise and reward children, no matter what situation children find themselves in. Children's achievements are clearly recognised across many areas of their lives and include small daily achievements alongside major milestones. When children need support to understand the impact of their behaviour, staff explain these to children, and the consequence is appropriate and proportionate. Staff focus on ways that children can repair relationships following difficult situations. Children feel valued when their achievements are consistently recognised.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Since the last inspection, the previous manager has left the home. There was a planned transition for the deputy manager to step up to this role. She was already well known to the children, and this helped to minimise the impact of staff changes and children's moves at the time. The new manager is suitably qualified, is registered with Ofsted and has high aspirations for the home and the children who live there.

The manager is extremely child focused and spends quality time with the children. Observations of the manager with the children show the value of the relationships that she has built with them. Children say that they have a good relationship with her and that she listens to them. The manager consistently models positive relationships, and children benefit from these positive and trusting relationships.

Children and other professionals all have really positive views of the manager. Staff report good team relationships. A member of staff said, 'All staff work hard to keep children at the centre of what they do.' Staff say that they are well supported and find the manager approachable, considerate and caring. Overall, she is a highly valued member of the staff team.

A number of school professionals spoke about valued communication links with the staff and manager. They recognise the dedicated work that staff do to encourage children to go to school or attend their alternative education settings. When a social worker has given the manager constructive feedback about communication, the manager has quickly implemented changes that have improved communication. The manager is receptive to learning and challenge and promotes an ethos of learning and development.

Staff receive regular and bespoke training to meet children's needs. All staff have undertaken the home's mandatory training in addition to training promoting therapeutic practice. Children benefit from the regular support provided by the lead therapeutic worker at the home. The manager identifies training to ensure that staff are fully equipped to meet children's additional needs. This improves the quality of care provided to children.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision. The manager has developed supervision aids to support reflective discussion and the development and improvement of staff practice. One member of staff said that their supervision sessions are 'brilliant'. Staff participate in regular team meetings. The manager encourages practice discussions based on research-informed topics. The leadership team's focus on development helps to improve the quality and continuity of care that children receive from well-supported and highly-trained staff.

The manager has effective oversight of records and uses monitoring systems to track efficiently the progress that children have made in all areas of their lives. She has developed tools informed by research-informed practice to better consider children's experiences of moving into the home. Overall, the manager has a clear understanding of the progress that children are making and how this is continuously celebrated by staff.

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: 2528516

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: Thomas Thurlow

Registered manager: Sarah-Jayne McCulloch

Inspector

Rebecca Hannell, Social Care Inspector

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