

SC479596

Registered provider: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people who have complex learning needs. The well-experienced registered manager has been running this home since 2008.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 September 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 9 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
07/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
27/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/01/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people have good, trusting relationships with the staff and can express their views. The staff know the children well and want the best for them. The staff and manager have good working relationships with professionals to ensure a consistent approach with the children and young people. There is good feedback from professionals in respect of communication, care provided and the progress of children and young people.

The children and young people are making progress in their learning and their physical and emotional well-being. They have made progress in areas such as personal hygiene, independence and social skills. The special moments in their journeys are captured in life-story books.

The children and young people are accessing regular therapy and engaging with it. The staff use methods such as play therapy between formal sessions to help children and young people to manage their emotions. The children and young people get help from the staff to ensure that their health needs are met.

Children and young people's views are listened to and they take part in the daily planning in the home, from menus to decorations. This also includes them choosing new furniture for the home and agreeing what activities they go on. Children and young people also take part in their reviews and are involved in decision-making.

The children and young people access many local community-based activities, such as St John Ambulance, army cadets, Moon on the Water, and the Rock Foundation, where they can access social and educational activities and events. All the children and young people have been to a summer break at Butlins and enjoyed this. They do a variety of activities, such as swimming, going to the disco, walks, learning to ice skate and horse riding.

The children and young people learn independence skills such as cooking, saving money, and taking money out of the bank. They have access to free time when appropriate, during which they engage in activities such as learning to shop independently.

The children and young people benefit from having well-planned transitions in and out of the home. If the child or young person has arrived as an emergency admission, the staff will give time and space for them to adjust to the new environment by using a nurturing, calm approach. The staff maintain relationships with children and young people who have left the home. This gives children and young people a feeling of continuity and belonging.

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

The children and young people know the expectations for their behaviour. They get rewards for positive behaviour and making the right choices. The staff use restorative consequences for negative behaviour, such as getting the child or young person to help to repair damage that they have caused. Discussions with staff help the children and young people to reflect on and understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

The staff use empathy and a nurturing approach to de-escalate any aggressive behaviours. They record any incidents and debriefs take place with everyone involved. The staff use physical intervention only as a last resort to ensure everyone's safety. The children and young people can give their views and discuss their behaviours with the adults who are looking after them.

The staff know the children and young people well and spend a lot of time with them. This helps to keep the children and young people safe. Risks are known and understood. However, on one occasion the risk assessment was not been following a serious incident with a child. The absence of a clear behaviour-management strategy is an inconsistent approach to managing incidents.

The children and young people rarely go missing and if they do, the staff take appropriate steps to ensure their safety. There are no issues with bullying and no allegations have been made against the staff.

Regular access to therapy sessions helps children and young people to regulate their emotions and reduce risky behaviours. Visits to the home by different professionals who specialise in child exploitation, e-safety and crime prevention further help children and young people to stay safe. The children and young people have internet safety measures in place that are working.

The staff support the children and young people to take age-appropriate risks, such as using public transport and going shopping on their own.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has a thorough understanding of the needs of the children and young people and the progress that they are making. She ensures that children and young people receive a good standard of care and involves them in everyday decision-making. The staff and the manager work well together and have a clear vision for the home regarding how to meet the needs of the children and young people.

The staff who are new receive good induction training and support from the management and staff in the home. The staff access additional training in respect of the children's needs, such as those associated with epilepsy. The staff are keen to learn any new skills that will help them to promote better outcomes for children and young people. This includes learning how to use Makaton so that they can improve their communication with children and young people.

The manager can identify arising needs of the children and young people and ensure that staff can meet their needs. She has taken decisive action to rectify these by arranging specialist training in mental health for staff. The staff receive additional therapeutic support to help them to cope with challenging situations.

There are gaps in staff supervision and annual appraisals. This reduces the manager's knowledge and oversight in respect of the staff's performance, training needs and welfare issues. As a result, this limits the manager's effectiveness in identifying and acting to improve the service for children and young people.

The manager has not always ensured that notifications relating to significant incidents are shared with the regulator. These have not always been received in a timely way, which therefore has an impact on the way in which the regulator maintains an overview of how the home is managed and how children and young people are safeguarded.

The staff and the manager have good multi-agency links. They have regular liaison with schools, social workers and therapeutic settings. The staff have improved their links with the local police and local community, which has helped to achieve better experiences for children and young people.

The manager challenges authorities if she feels that children and young people's needs are not being met. For example, she took prompt action to speed up the process of admission into this home when a child was not receiving nurturing care in another setting.

The house looks like a family home. The home is well maintained and the manager ensures that any damage or wear and tear are quickly repaired.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(b)(c))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff have supervision on a monthly basis for full-time staff, and for others as per company policy. The registered person must also ensure that appraisals are completed annually. 	26/11/2019
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(e))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specifically, the registered person must ensure that notifications of all serious incidents in relation to children in the home are notified to HMCI. 	26/11/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should 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 (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5). Specifically, risk assessments should be updated following the emergence of any new risks and behaviours.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC479596

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd, 107 Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN31 3ER

Responsible individual: Hugh Mellett

Registered manager: Kim Treacher

Inspector

Krista Hardy: social care regulatory inspector

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