

SC444869

Registered provider: Hopedale Children and Family Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care for up to 15 children who have suffered adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. There is also a school on the same site.

The registered managers have completed their level 5 qualifications.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 November 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: 14 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: Ofsted inspected the home in July 2019 after receiving information about the quality of care provided by the service. This information included concerns regarding behaviour management and the use of physical restraint. Inspectors found significant shortfalls that compromised children's safety and welfare. Ofsted issued two compliance notices following that inspection.

Ofsted undertook a further monitoring inspection at the home in August 2019. This inspection found that improvements had been made and the compliance notices were met. Ofsted undertook another monitoring inspection on 5 September 2019 to

review progress being made.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
19/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
25/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/06/2016	Full	Outstanding

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(ix))</p>	9/01/2020
<p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 35(2))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that the policy directs staff to accurately record the number of instances of restraint, and lead managers to sufficiently evaluate these records to confirm that this measure of control is always necessary.</p>	9/01/2020

Recommendations

- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as

learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build strong and trusted relationships with staff. They receive affectionate and nurturing care from staff who know them well. This helps children to settle and develop a strong sense of belonging. As a result, children make good progress in different aspects of their development.

Good structure and routine set the foundations for children's progress. Staff keep children at the heart of their practice. They provide them with well-thought-out and consistent care. This helps children to know what is expected of them and to feel safe and secure.

Staff use a range of child-friendly approaches to help children participate in their day-to-day care. Regular children's meetings provide them with the opportunity to discuss menus and activities. Managers have introduced imaginative and personalised internal placement plans. These help children to participate in more complex decisions about aspects of their care. As a result, children understand and develop a sense of ownership over their care.

All children attend school. Staff and teachers work closely to provide children with consistent and seamless care. They communicate daily, sharing important information about children's emotional well-being and overall progress. When necessary, they work together to provide children with bespoke care. For example, one child displays heightened behaviour prior to attending school. In response, staff and teachers adapted the child's school timetable to address his level of anxiety. This proactive and individualised approach helps children to engage in education and make progress with their learning.

Some children have a range of complex care needs. Staff work closely with a range of specialist services to ensure that they provide good-quality, informed care. They advocate strongly on children's behalf if they feel that further specialist assessment or support is required. This strong response helps to promote children's good health.

Children enjoy a range of positive social and recreational activities. This includes trips to local theme parks and swimming pools. Staff support children to develop their hobbies and interests. For example, children enjoy football, singing and reading. Children also

enjoy a range of holidays alongside staff and their peers. These enjoyable experiences create positive memories for children and develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff provide children with sensitive support to help them build important self-care skills. These skills enable children to take appropriate risks such as visiting shops independently. However, children are not allowed to own mobile phones. In addition, they are unable to contact people or external organisations without seeking permission from staff. This blanket approach does not afford children an appropriate degree of freedom or choice as they move towards adulthood.

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

Managers regularly review and update children's risk assessments. These informative documents help staff to recognise triggers to children's behaviours. They provide staff with clear guidance to take suitable steps to reduce the risk of children harming themselves or others. Staff encourage children to identify their own strategies to help them to manage their behaviours and frustrations. This means that children start to understand their emotions and make better choices about their behaviour.

Staff work alongside children to agree bedtime routines and times to switch off electrical devices. Switches previously used to cut off the electricity supply to plug sockets in children's bedrooms have now been covered and disabled. Furthermore, the inspectors found no evidence of locked communal areas. This means that children can access all areas of their home.

Managers have recently recruited a senior member of staff to provide additional scrutiny of safeguarding practice in the home. While this role is in its infancy, it has the potential to strengthen processes and use learning to develop staff practice and keep children safe.

Safeguarding processes continue to improve. Managers take effective action when concerns about children's welfare arise. They share information with key safeguarding partners in a timely manner. This robust approach helps to keep children safe.

Staff offer incentives and rewards to help children to focus on their behavioural targets. Staff use sanctions to address children's unacceptable or anti-social behaviour. However, these are not always restorative in nature. As a result, this does not help children to recognise the impact that their behaviours have on others.

Staff use restraint to manage children's aggressive, challenging or harmful behaviours when verbal prompts or distraction techniques fail. Managers now ensure that staff record the antecedents and triggers to these incidents. However, managers do not always question why there are occasions when staff record more than one restraint on a single record. This practice means that the number of restraints documented may not accurately reflect the actual number of restraint incidents.

Behaviour management policies do not sufficiently guide managers in their evaluation of incidents of restraint. This means that, in their assessment and review of restraint records, managers do not consistently consider if the use of restraint is always necessary to prevent immediate or serious harm to children.

Safe recruitment practices ensure that all new potential employees are properly vetted. This protects children from unsafe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers know children well and are passionate about providing quality care to them. The well-resourced and diverse staff team means that children have access to staff with a range of expertise. Managers use staff experiences and skills to carefully match individuals to be key workers to specific children. This tailored approach helps children to form strong relationships and make good progress.

Managers provide staff with a healthy learning environment. They have extensively reflected on the shortfalls identified during previous monitoring inspections. Staff work well with the in-house therapist and attend weekly reflective meetings. In addition, managers and staff have completed internal workshops to develop staff practice and embed learning. Staff feel that their practice continues to evolve and improve.

Good internal monitoring systems help to identify strengths and areas of development. In addition, staff take lead roles in a number of areas including training and managing medication. This brings an added resilience and strength to the staff.

The independent visitors' reports lack the necessary detail and scrutiny to continually develop practice. Managers are aware of this shortfall and continue to work alongside the independent visitor to improve the quality of reports.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive training programme with a key focus on specialist aspects of care. Managers ensure that training is in line with the needs of each child. This ensures that staff have the skills and knowledge required to meet the individual needs of children.

Staff say that managers and colleagues are supportive and help them to reflect on the demands of their role. They benefit from good-quality inductions and ongoing appraisal. Managers have played a key role in supporting staff to develop and embed changes to their practice. However, there are some gaps in staff supervisions and the quality of these records is variable.

Staff develop strong working relationships with a number of agencies. This coordinated approach helps children to make good progress. Feedback from professionals is complementary. A social worker told the inspector, 'Staff know the child and his needs. They know what works best for him. They share information with me and are really helpful. The progress the child has made has been dramatic.'

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: SC444869

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hopedale Children and Family Services Limited

Registered provider address: Hopedale House, Wall Lane Terrace, Cheddleton, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 7ED

Responsible individual: Amy Hopkin

Registered managers: Sarah Deaville and
Clare Ratcliffe

Inspectors

Gareth Leckey, social care inspector
Jo Stephenson, social care inspector

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