

SC479596

Registered provider: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to seven children with complex learning needs.

The registered manager is in day-to-day charge of the home. She registered with Ofsted in 2007.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 7 January 2021, to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 March 2022

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: 25 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2019	Full	Good
09/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
07/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
27/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The quality of care that the children receive helps them to thrive. The children gain a sense of stability, as they have lived at this home for between one and four years. One child told the inspector that they did not ever want to leave. This home provides the children with an environment where they flourish and enjoy life.

Children have differing life experiences, health conditions and diagnoses. The staff adapt and develop their knowledge and skills to ensure that they provide the best care for the children. As a result, children's progress is significant. For example, three years ago, one child had limited communication and social interaction skills. This child has now developed their ability to communicate through verbal speech and sign language. They enjoy activities with peers, including swimming, and they also like having their favourite stories and nursery rhymes read to them.

Education is an integral part of the children's daily routine. During the national lockdowns that took place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the children shielded together and the staff created group learning sessions. The manager worked with professionals to source an appropriate school for one child. Until a school was found, the staff spent time developing the child's ability to play and communicate. This approach helps children to understand the importance of education. This child is now attending school and making good progress.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle and enjoy eating healthy meals. Children also attend all of their routine health appointments. The staff's encouragement and support help to reduce children's fear and apprehension regarding medical professionals and procedures. This means that children's health needs are met.

Careful and considered transition planning provides the manager with time to plan for children's moves out of the home, and allows for the plans to be adapted when necessary. On the one occasion when a child experienced an unplanned move out of the home, the child accepted an invitation back to the home to have a leaving party. This gave the child the opportunity to say goodbye and experience a positive ending to their time at the home.

The children live in a home that has been adapted to their needs. The children love the garden and the sensory room. These are equipped to provide children with positive stimulation and relaxation. There are areas of the home that need repair, including one bathroom and the lounge flooring. Maintenance work to the bathroom is planned, but was not completed during the inspection.

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

The children's complex health needs and learning disabilities increase their vulnerabilities. Staffing ratios are high, to give the children the necessary supervision

and support. Children can have up to 30 minutes of free time in the community, if this has been thoroughly assessed and planned. A child spoke confidently about going out alone in the community, and how this plan was built up over time. This structured approach means that children do not go missing from this home, even when they have free time.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. Staff help to prepare children for the changes that happen to their bodies as they reach puberty. Children's independence and privacy around their personal care have developed because of the staff's commitment to helping children who were incontinent to be toilet-trained. For some children this is significant progress.

Children's risk assessments provide staff with the necessary guidance to help children and reduce risk. However, the decision to have 'star-key' locks fitted to some internal doors potentially restricts children's movement and the rationale behind this decision is not transparent in the children's records.

Staff understand that some behaviours are a form of communication for children with learning needs and disabilities. De-escalation techniques are at the forefront of staff practice. The staff continually review, reflect on and learn about children's needs. This knowledge informs their practice and helps them to develop effective strategies to support the children. For example, in response to one child's need to climb, the manager installed a climbing wall in the child's bedroom. One child also has access to two bedrooms: one that limits sensory stimulus and another that is fully furnished. This personalised approach helps children's growth and development.

Staff are guided by clear procedures for the storage and administration of medication. Children with epilepsy can require staff to administer rescue medication, and the staff have the necessary training and confidence to support children through their seizures. However, one child's epilepsy plan is not being followed during their travel to and from school. The escorts who accompany children on school transport are not trained to administer rescue medication to children. Rescue medication is prescribed to meet the emergency health needs of children. This shortfall is a significant issue that may create a delay in children receiving necessary treatment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a committed and stable senior leadership team. The staff speak highly about the guidance and support that they receive. The staff routinely review and explore ways to improve the care experiences of the children.

The manager has created a safe environment where the staff can confidently challenge each other, and report and respond to shortfalls in care practice. Lessons are learned from internal investigations, and practice improvement plans are created and reviewed by the manager. This approach helps to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

The building of strong and positive relationships is at the heart of the care practice in this home. One professional said, '[Child's name] generally loves the team, they go over and above, they are just like one big family.' Partnership working is effective and there is regular consultation with parents, carers and professionals. These excellent relationships ensure that the children receive the best possible care. For example, the local police help the staff to educate children about the safe use of social media.

Internal monitoring systems help the manager to focus on care practice and the children's progress. Staff routinely attend training that reflects the needs of each child. Training for foetal alcohol spectrum disorder has not been sourced or completed by staff. Staff would benefit from this training to improve their knowledge and understanding of this condition and the impact it has on the children who have it.

Staff consult with children, and the children's wishes are heard. The staff encourage the children to be involved in the decisions about their care. The children pick what fun activities they want to do. However, the manager's use of consultation in her six-monthly overview of the home is limited. This is a missed opportunity to further develop the service.

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
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23 (1))	29 April 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that damage and repairs are routinely undertaken so the children’s home is a homely, domestic environment. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that any decisions to limit a child’s access to any area of the home, and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child’s welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child’s needs, and should be properly recorded and kept under regular review. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the needs of children with foetal alcohol syndrome disorder. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 34, paragraph 7.12)
- The registered person should ensure that the six-monthly review of the quality of care includes an evaluation of the consultation with children and other agencies. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 64, paragraph 15.2)

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: SC479596

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Limited

Registered provider address: 107 Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby, North East
Lincolnshire DN31 3ER

Responsible individual: Hugh Mellett

Registered manager: Kim Treacher

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022