

SC454294

Registered provider: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to eight children. The statement of purpose says that the home is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment along with family support to psychologically traumatised children.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2015.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 February 2020

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 9 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
14/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
29/12/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. Their relationships with staff are warm and appropriately familial. Children are confident in the group and in their interactions with staff. Inspectors observed very thoughtful interactions, with children held central to the evening's planning. There was natural play, a great deal of fun, and a genuine sense of belonging.

Children all attend the onsite school. The therapeutic ethos across the organisation leads to children learning in a style which suits them. As a result children make significant progress, even when they have found education difficult in the past. Children engage in a range of socially and emotionally stimulating activities in the community. Children are beginning to form some positive friendships and are increasing in confidence.

Children are actively encouraged to explore their culture and identity. Those who have moved significant distances continue to see relatives and those important to them; they celebrate events specific to where they were born. Other children are involved in understanding and learning about other's cultures through celebration of significant events. Life story work has been identified as a gap by local authorities. The registered manager, who is currently undertaking a relevant master's degree, is developing a life story programme to be used as an additional method of helping children understanding their culture and identity for children.

Children's emotional wellbeing is held central to all practice. Integrated working with therapists and school staff provides children with a consistent and complete approach to care. Children learn through staff modelling how to express their emotions, in a safe space to continually emotionally develop and grow, while recognising the impact they have on each other.

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

Children's actions and demeanour show they are conformable in their home. They all participate in reflective discussion and approach staff when they require help or support. Staff understand that all behaviour is a form of communication. Staff get alongside children to help them understand how they were feeling and how to manage some of these difficult emotions in the future. Daily group meetings give children the opportunity to explore their actions, and those of others and to work towards a resolution. Staff displayed understanding and insight in the way they managed conflict between children during the inspection.

Staff respond swiftly and thoughtfully to safeguarding or child protection concerns. Joint working with partner agencies is strong and effective in the protecting children.

Staff have an acute understating of each child's vulnerabilities, and strive to ensure they are physically and emotionally safe at all times. Staff are clear about how to report any concerns, including how to escalate practice issues outside of the organisation. Staff say that they feel safe to question or challenge each other, and leaders and managers in the organisation.

Children are protected from risks in the wider community through close supervision and learning how to keep safe and protect themselves. Children's access to the internet is supervised once it is felt they are able to manage being on line. Older children who do not have access to the internet are potentially missing out on valuable lessons of how to be safe online while living in a supportive environment.

Children rarely go missing from the home, and when they do there is a coordinated and thorough response to locate them. The warm welcome and genuine interest in their welfare they receive on their return has been shock to some children who have experienced care elsewhere. The home in the main is not risk averse however, decisions about children being independent in the community are not clearly assessed in order to demonstrate that the right balance is achieved between keeping children safe and allowing them the opportunities to develop independence skills.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is effectively managed by the registered manager and two deputy managers. Staff say they are well supported by the management team and that they respect their openness and honesty.

Staff have access to a high standard of training, including all having access to bespoke training, and qualification to masters' level, in therapeutic care. This means that they all have the skills necessary to fulfil the therapeutic ethos and approach as detailed in the home's statement of purpose. Staff are reflective in their practice and approach to children's care, this leads to changes in approach to children's care when this is needed.

The managers and senior team have high aspirations for the children, staff and home. They are continually seeking to improve the service and the quality of care and support for children. Monitoring is effective, including recognising that reports from the independent visitor do not provide them with the level of scrutiny and challenge they require.

The management team have an excellent awareness of children's progress, which is monitored through a variety of approaches. Plans are consistently monitored and reviewed, and progress, no matter how apparently minor, is celebrated. Suitable challenge of partner agencies ensures children's best interests are continually held in mind.

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

Recommendations

- Children should have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning, unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate. In such cases, the home should consider whether and how it can support the child to access a computer and the internet safely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19)
- Children's home staff should take reasonable precautions and make informed professional judgements based on the individual child's needs and developmental stage about when to allow a child to take a particular risk or follow a particular course of action. Staff should discuss the decision with the child's placing authority where appropriate. If a child makes a choice that would place them or another person at significant risk of harm, staff should assist them to understand the risks and manage their risk-taking behaviour to keep themselves and others safe. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42 , paragraph 9.7)

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: SC454294

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Institute of Integrated Systemic Therapy

Registered provider address: 210 Borough High Street, LONDON, SE1 1JX

Responsible individual: Stephen Blunden

Registered manager: Orette King

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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