

1226971

Registered provider: Thornleigh Camphill Communities Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to 12 children aged from six years old. Some children stay until they are 19, as part of their care plan. All the children have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities and education, health and care plans.

Care is currently provided in two homes, which are on the same site as the school. At the time of this inspection, four children were living here.

The registered manager has been in post since January 2020 and has been registered with Ofsted since October 2020. However, he has had periods of absence this year. In his absence, the home has been led and managed effectively by the responsible individual and deputy managers.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 September 2021

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: 10 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Full	Good
09/01/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/06/2018	Full	Good
21/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make positive progress at this home. Staff understand the individual needs of each child and tailor their care accordingly. Staff take time to build relationships with children and get to know their likes and dislikes very well. This informs how they work with children and how children experience the care they receive.

Staff have positive aspirations for children. Children are supported and prepared well for their futures and helped to develop independence skills. Staff take the time to support children to communicate their views and wishes and to have agency over their own lives.

Staff work closely with families to achieve each child's goals. Parents told inspectors that communication is excellent, and they feel included in their child's day-to-day lives. Staff understand the importance of family relationships to children and extend their support to families to the benefit of the child.

Staff work collaboratively with families and professionals to provide holistic care for children. Leaders and managers advocate effectively for children and challenge decisions when necessary, to promote the child's needs.

Staff speak warmly of the children and enjoy working here. Staff have the opportunity to work with all of the children. This helps the children not to become reliant on a particular member of staff and encourages multiple relationships. This means that no one staff member is viewed as the expert on any child and all staff experiences are valid and inform care-planning, taking multiple perspectives into account.

Managers and leaders have worked hard to make the home feel comfortable and welcoming. However, the use of keypad locks on some internal doors and signs for visitor/staff toilets detracts from this.

Children are offered a range of activities and make full use of the extensive grounds. However, staff and parents told inspectors that they feel the home is not creative enough in providing more activities. Furthermore, children do not access the local area often to build their sense of identity in the community.

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

Children are kept safe and told the inspectors that they like living here and like the staff. Parents said that they are confident that their child feels safe within the home. This offers great reassurance to parents when children need to live away from home.

Safeguarding concerns are investigated thoroughly and actions taken promptly. Leaders and managers are reflective following concerns raised and learn from incidents to improve practice and processes.

Staff provide a calm and predictable environment to help children feel safe. For one child, this has meant they no longer require prescribed anxiety medication. Staff help children to build resilience by helping them to express and understand their emotions, enabling them to self-regulate.

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to keep children safe. Following incidents, children are debriefed in a child-focused way within an appropriate time frame for the child. Staff are also debriefed appropriately and in a timely manner.

Children are cared for by a staff team that has been recruited safely and is appropriately trained.

Medication is stored and administered safely. However, support plans for medication that is to be administered as required do not contain sufficient detail and could be open to interpretation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has had periods of planned absence this year. In his absence, the home has been managed effectively by a strong leadership team consisting of two deputy managers and a responsible individual. This capable team has created a positive environment for children, who say they are happy and like living here. Equally, staff report high job satisfaction and enjoy working with the children and within the home's ethos.

Leaders and managers have good oversight of the home and respond quickly to areas of vulnerability. For example, further training has been sought to address staff dissatisfaction and promote staff retention.

Leaders and managers offer regular supervision, which staff say they find supportive. Furthermore, staff feel confident approaching leaders and managers when needed. Supervision records do not reflect the detail of issues discussed to protect both parties. Supervision is not always reflective, and when it is, the conversations are not recorded in depth.

Performance concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Leaders and managers take effective action in managing concerns of poor staff performance, ensuring that children's safety is not compromised.

Children take an active part in decisions about the home and their views are captured during house meetings. However, leaders and managers do not ensure that they clearly inform children of the actions they have taken in response to children's feedback.

The independent person visits the home regularly. However, these visits usually take place during the school day meaning that children only meet with the independent person at lunchtime. This limits the opportunity for a thorough review of the quality of care being provided throughout the week. The responsible individual is aware of the weaknesses of this monitoring and is taking action to improve practice.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that locks on internal doors and visitor signs are removed, to provide a homely environment for children. This will provide a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that house-meeting minutes include evidence of the action taken in response to children's suggestions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are accurately recorded and that both the person giving the supervision and the staff member have a copy of the record. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, ensure that the documents for PRN or as and when required medication has sufficient detail to ensure safe administration in the appropriate circumstances. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. In particular, ensure that they visit at different times to capture full detail of how the home operates and, if they consent, to interview the children, their parents and relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 1226971

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Thornleigh Camphill Communities Limited

Responsible individual: Nicholas Pike

Registered manager: Steven Taylor-Hayward

Inspectors

Katie Ratcliffe, Social Care Inspector

Paula Lahey, Social Care Inspector

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