

# 2509473

Registered provider: Back on Track Children's Services SE Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The service and the manager were registered with Ofsted on 12 February 2019. This is the first inspection following registration.

**Inspection dates:** 21 to 22 May 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:** not applicable

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** not applicable

## 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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))</p>	<p>05/07/2019</p>

### Recommendations

- Children's home staff should take every step to make sure that individual children and young people are not subject to discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by their gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, disability or for any other reason. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.12)

Ensure that children understand their right to press charges following an incident of serious bullying.
- A home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home in accordance with Regulation 24. Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)

Specifically, with reference to producing a policy relating to the use of CCTV and monitoring equipment.
- Children should be given a choice about how their personal space is decorated in accordance with Regulation 7 (2)(a)(i). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- 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)

In particular, ensure that staff are working to up-to-date individual risk assessments.

- Registered persons have a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons which may include services, individuals (including parents), agencies, organisations and establishments that work with children in the local community, e.g. police, schools, health and youth offending teams (Regulation 5 – engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met). These working relationships will also be key to success in delivering the care planning standard (Regulation 14). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)

With specific reference to involving services which include the youth offending service and the police community support officer (PCSO) to form part of prevention and early intervention work.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

This is the home's first inspection since opening in February 2019. The members of the newly formed staff team work extremely well together. This has created a positive and caring atmosphere, where children have started to make good progress. For example, one child who is highly vulnerable no longer goes missing or absent or engages in anti-social behaviour. This is an excellent achievement.

Staff develop warm and trusting bonds with the children. These relationships are a real strength of the home, with one parent commenting that her son is 'really close to staff' and 'absolutely loves it there'.

Children are expected to attend school. Staff work closely with virtual school heads to identify the right educational provision for each child. A strong emphasis on partnership working provides an exceptional level of support. This has resulted in one child's attendance increasing to 96%, with plans to reduce their support next term due to their continued progress.

Children understand their right to advocacy and know how to raise a complaint. They describe staff as 'good listeners' and feel confident to voice their views, wishes and feelings. Regular meetings cover a range of topics that aid children to contribute suggestions and to work through their differences, which influence change.

Children take part in a range of exciting activities, which offer opportunities to

socialise and to develop new interests. One child has discovered a talent for trampolining and is taking part in an upcoming competition. Another child is joining a parkour group, after staff recognised his gymnastic ability.

Children benefit from living in a comfortable, spacious and modern home with excellent facilities. An AstroTurf area in the garden makes this accessible all year round, where children enjoy playing games together, such as football. Following consultation with the children, their bedrooms are due to be redecorated, personalising them to a theme of their choice.

External closed-circuit television (CCTV) and door alarms are used to monitor the security and safety of children. Consent is sought on admission, as stated in the home's statement of purpose. However, the policy is currently in draft form and requires updating to include the door alarm system.

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

Staff are confident in their knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They understand the importance of monitoring the children for signs of exploitation. Staff lead regular discussions to help children to develop a healthy awareness of the risks that they may face.

Children's health needs are well met. They receive advice on topics such as smoking cessation and healthy eating. This helped a child to gain weight in line with their health plan. Two children attend play therapy, assisting their emotional development. Foster carers supervising a recent visit between a child and their siblings were astonished by the improvement that they saw in the child's presentation and interpersonal skills.

Children are engaged in meaningful conversations, which help them to reflect and explore how they are feeling. A social worker complimented the staff who have enabled a child to start to recognise and control their anger. Children describe strategies, such as going for a short walk before they talk to staff, as being a way in which they can regulate their emotions.

Staff work closely together to consider how best to manage any difficult behaviours. They successfully de-escalate most situations without the use of control measures, such as restraint.

A recent admission has led to several serious incidents. One of these incidents involved calling the police to the home. These incidents were not notified to Ofsted. Some of these incidents involved the targeting of another child. A swift response was taken to increase staffing levels and to apply a range of preventative strategies. However, the manager had not considered contacting the youth offending service or PCSO to request additional intervention. This would have been appropriate bearing in mind the serious impact of these incidents. The

additional safeguarding measures while documented have not been added to the children's risk management plans.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is highly experienced and holds the relevant qualification in leadership and management. She is passionate in developing the service to offer a highly nurturing and homely experience to children, where they can thrive.

Staff describe the manager as approachable and supportive. She leads by example, modelling expected standards of care. Her commitment and enthusiasm resonate across her staff team, as a result the team members are dedicated and highly motivated. She is supported by a strong deputy manager and senior staff, all of whom have clear delegated tasks. This contributes to the smooth running of the home.

Staff are carefully inducted into their roles, supported by the whole team to understand and meet the needs of the children. New staff initially shadow experienced staff, providing the opportunity to learn and ask questions. Staff performance is well managed, with staff receiving good-quality supervision to support them to advance.

The manager has developed strong relationships with a network of professionals. A representative from the virtual school spoke of their high regard for the manager, describing her as a 'fantastic professional' and stating that the manager is just what their child needs to help them progress.

Training is varied and meaningful, which ensures that staff are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to respond to children's complex and diverse needs. This includes training in relation to topics such as self-harm and sexually harmful behaviour. Leaders and managers have planned to introduce specialised training to enhance the team members' skills, introducing a therapeutic informed approach to care.

## **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:** 2509473

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Back on Track Children's Services SE Limited

**Registered provider address:** 185 Dover Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7NB

**Responsible individual:** John McDonald-Baker

**Registered manager:** Katie Smissen

## Inspector

Joe Davys: social care inspector

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